

EVERYDAY
LIFE IN
BENGAL


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WILLIAM HART





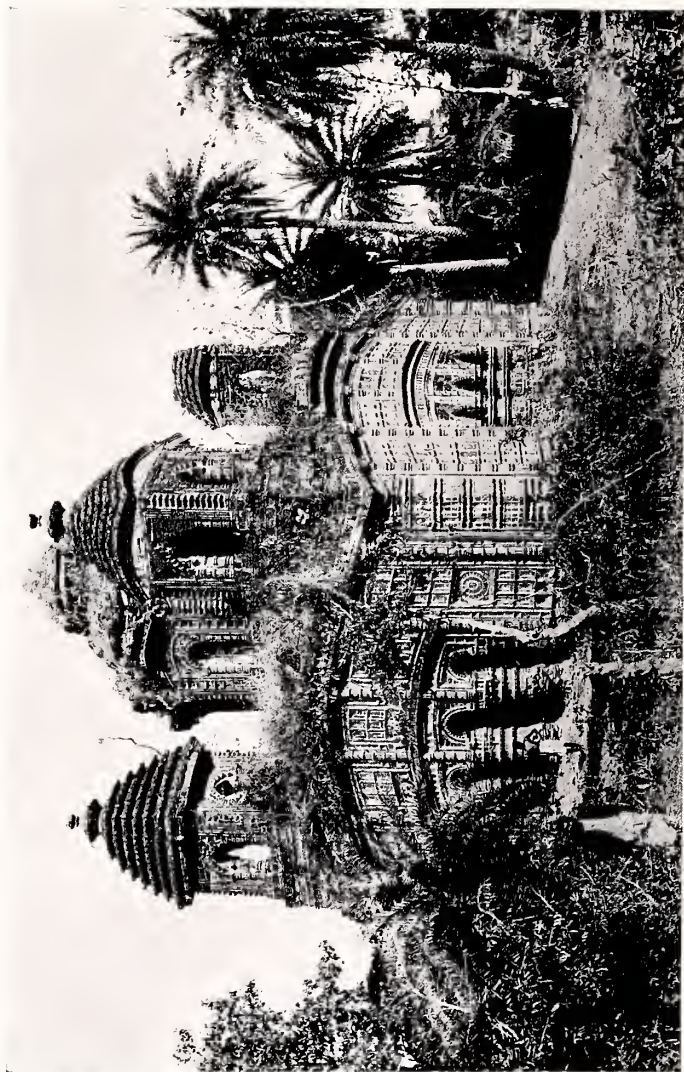
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EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL



RUINS OF A HINDU TEMPLE AT BISHENPUR.

Frontispiece.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

AND OTHER INDIAN SKETCHES

BY

WILLIAM H. HART

(FORMERLY OF CALCUTTA)

WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC ILLUSTRATIONS

London

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2 CASTLE ST., CITY RD., AND 26 PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

FOREWORD



SOME of these sketches have already appeared in the pages of the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine*, and the writer has been assured that they proved to be of interest to a number of its readers. Others are now published for the first time ; and it is hoped that these may prove interesting too, as well as profitable. These brief papers do not profess to contribute much towards the solution of the great problems which confront us in the East. They endeavour, in the simplest manner, to tell something about common life and familiar things in India, and they answer many of the questions which are continually

FOREWORD

being asked of those who have returned from that country. It is earnestly hoped that they may prove of some small service in awakening and in deepening interest in that distant dependency, and in the work which is being done for its people.

About half of the illustrations are from photographs taken by the writer ; one or two others he owes to the kindness of certain of his former fellow workers ; and the remainder have been placed at his disposal by his old friend and colleague, the Rev. Joseph R. Broadhead, once of the Calcutta District.

CONTENTS



I

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

	PAGE
The difference between India and the Colonies—The bygone empires—The concern of the statesman, the merchant, and the philanthropist—The spirit of British rule—The words of a departing Viceroy	i

II

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

A city of contrasts—Dirt and devotion—The god shop —The bed of spikes—A modest charity—Sacrifices to the goddess Kali—The crematorium—The Hindu heaven and hell—The god-maker and his child— The religion of the mass—A bygone disgrace to the British name	14
--	----

III

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

Religion and common life—The temple of Kali—Spiritual insurances—Henry Martyn's pagoda—The idolater on wheels—The idol-car and its use—The Jains and their beautiful temple—Degenerate Buddhism	29
--	----

CONTENTS

IV

IN THE BAZAAR

	PAGE
What the word means—Methods of bargaining—The delight of a wrangle—Ladies who smoked the 'hubble-bubble'—The opium shop—The Government and the distillery—The primary school—The Christian bookshop and the open-air service .	50

V

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

How the house is planned—Domestic servants—A strange system, working well—The punkawalla—Why English children are sent home—The missionary's child and heathen worship—The snakes and other common pests—The daily round of life .	65
--	----

VI

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

On the main line, and off—The bad old-fashioned way—The camel cart—His Majesty's mail—Adventures on the road—The 'push-push'—Palankin, bullock cart, and green boat—Darjeeling and its great disaster	85
---	----

VII

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Christmas in Calcutta—The public morning 'dip'—Riverside scenes and roadside occupations—Leprous beggars—The funeral party—The Church and the School—Hinduism now losing ground .	104
---	-----

CONTENTS

VIII

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

PAGE

62,000,000 of them—Musalman missionaries—Laxity of faith and practice in Bengal—Eastern eclecticism—The 'five points'—The feast of Ramazan—Waiting for the new moon—The Mohurru festival—Bitter sectarian strife—The great processions—The Musalmans of the household . . .	122
---	-----

IX

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

Great Hindu festivals—Business blocked—The 'Durga Puja'—Family reunion—The Jagannath procession—Former self-immolation—Christian preachers at the fair—A country festival—Opposition idols and quarrelling priests—Disturbing the swindlers—The hook-swinging ceremony . . .	144
--	-----

X

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

The Andaman Islands, and where they are—Ten thousand convicts—Comparative freedom—Convict marriages—Viper Island—A ferocious prisoner—Assassination of Lord Mayo—The industries of the islands—European prisoners formerly sent there—The aboriginal tribes, and efforts to help them—The trade in edible birds' nests—Dying races of mankind . . .	162
---	-----

XI

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

The census of India—From China to Arabia—An army of voluntary workers—The humours of census-	
--	--

CONTENTS

	PAGE
taking and its dangers—Drastic sanitary measures —A matter for careful arrangement—Smart work in a native State—What is the use of it all? . . .	181

XII

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

The young missionary—Early responsibilities—A promising inquirer—A satisfactory examination —The university certificates—A startling turn— The real Simon Pure—The laying of the trap— How the victim walked into it—A dramatic moment; and a bitter disappointment for more persons than one	196
---	-----

XIII

OFF TO THE WEDDING

In the days of youth—Away from the city—The slow train—The 'Missionary Box'—Antique chariots —The river crossing—Missionary hospitality— Turned out for the night—The great occasion— A glove apiece—A lack of church accommodation —The agitated bridegroom—On the road again— A place of songs	210
--	-----

XIV

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA, AND HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHRISTIAN EFFORT

Census returns—The Civil Service—The mercantile and industrial community—Hindrances to Christianity —The prevailing attitude—A tolerant indifference —A general ignorance—Occasional opposition— How the native interprets our faults—Interest in

CONTENTS

missions and active aid—Unofficial missionaries— Godly soldiers—The providence of Christian governors	PAGE 224
---	-------------

XV

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

When Warren Hastings ruled—Suttee fires—An ap- palling mortality—Interloping missionaries—A muzzled press—Domestic slavery common—The great servant question—Smoking the hookah—A somewhat liberal dietary—Public entertainments —Shopping and its excitements—Matrimonial ventures—The graveyards	248
--	-----

XVI

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

The ancient monuments—The sadness of the Indian funeral—Rose Aylmer and Walter Savage Landor— The grave of Thackeray's father—The founder of Calcutta—The cities of the Mutiny—The graves of Nicholson, Lawrence, and Havelock—Serampore and its missionaries—William Carey's tomb . . .	280
---	-----

XVII

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

'Babu English'—The native editor and the dictionary —Some choice extracts—Why widow re-marriage is impossible—A candid critic—Some queer epistles—Extracts from a picturesque biography	302
--	-----

CONTENTS

XVIII

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

	PAGE
The Jain temple—The curious gatekeeper—In too great a hurry—The parable of the photographer—A divine chemistry—The picture at last . . .	320

XIX

ON THE MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

The celestial arch—The dingy water-cart, and one of its by-products—The light of heaven on lowly toil	336
---	-----

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS



	PAGE
RUINS OF A HINDU TEMPLE AT BISHENPUR	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THE MUTINY MEMORIAL WELL AT CAWNPORE	5
THE BED OF SPIKES	17
THE MORNING BATH	21
A GROUP OF HINDU IDOLS	33
A HINDU TEMPLE NEAR CALCUTTA	37
A BUDDHIST DAGOBA, DARJEELING	45
A TYPICAL BENGALI BAZAAR	53
A SHOPKEEPER AT KURSEONG	53
THE ACROBAT AT A COUNTRY BUNGALOW	67
THE TOWN HOUSE	75
HIS MAJESTY'S MAIL	89
THE GREEN BOAT	99
A BENGAL HIGHWAY	105
THE FUNERAL PYRE	113
THE ITINERANT BARBER	113
EXTERIOR OF A PRIVATE TEMPLE, KURSEONG	117
INTERIOR OF A PRIVATE TEMPLE, KURSEONG	117
A WAYSIDE MOSQUE	127
A MOULVI READING THE KORAN	133
THE JUMMA MUSJID AT DELHI	139
AN IDOL-CAR	149
A HOLIDAY CROWD	159
A VILLAGE CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL NEAR CALCUTTA	159
A STUDENT INQUIRER WHO TURNED OUT WELL	197

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
A VERY SUPERIOR 'TURNOUT'	211
EXTRA ACCOMMODATION AT A COUNTRY HOUSE . .	219
DUM DUM, LORD ROBERTS' FIRST INDIAN STATION .	225
A BIT OF DARJEELING, 7,000 FEET ABOVE SEA-LEVEL	245
OLD HINDU TEMPLE AT ALDEEN, USED AS AN ORATORY BY HENRY MARTYN A CENTURY AGO .	273
THE DILKUSHA PALACE, IN THE GROUNDS OF WHICH HAVELOCK DIED	281
WILLIAM CAREY'S TOMB	297
A JAIN TEMPLE, CALCUTTA	321

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL



I

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

The difference between India and the Colonies—The bygone empires—The concern of the statesman, the merchant, and the philanthropist—The spirit of British rule—The words of a departing Viceroy.

IT is sometimes a little surprising to find how many people at home take a keen interest in matters which concern our great empire in the East. It is not always one which appears to lead to any very exact acquaintance with either its geo-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

graphy or its history, but it is genuine, so far as it goes. It will be found that this interest is very generally one with personal considerations behind it ; for our national connexion with India has, during the last two hundred years, affected more or less closely a very large number of families at home. It will be at once seen that we stand in a very different position towards India from that which we occupy in relation to our great colonial possessions. We never cease to be exiles in the East. Large numbers of people go out to our colonies and become presently lost to English life and almost to English memory. They become absorbed in the growing population of the new country, and settle permanently there. It is not so with India. There we do not and cannot colonize. We send out a steadily increasing stream of people, bent on the affairs of commerce, of government, or

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

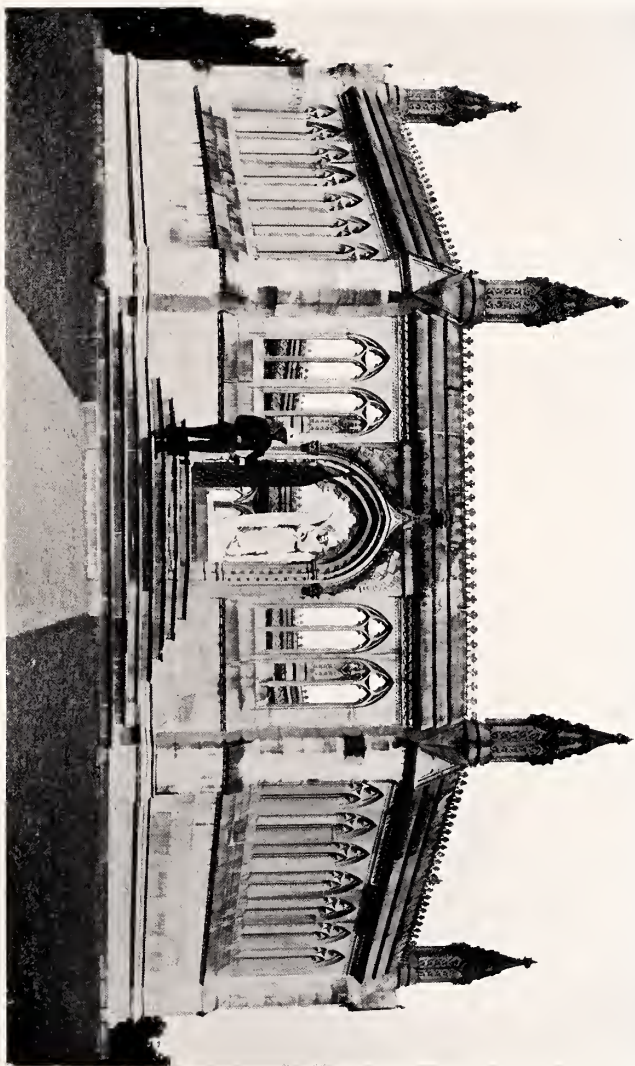
of religion, but they all come back again. The exceptions to the rule consist almost wholly of those who have gone to that bourne from which no traveller returns. Hence one finds everywhere people who are interested in anything which concerns life and work in India.

And it is indeed a country, or rather a continent, worthy of our attention and concern. It has a wonderful and stirring history. It was the home of ancient civilizations which go back to the dim dawn of history. There, six hundred years before Christ, one of the most influential systems of religion the world has ever known, still powerful to-day, had its birth. Three hundred years later Alexander the Great crossed its borders in his conquering career. Long before the Buddha taught, Hinduism, in the days of its comparative purity, ruled the minds and consciences of men; and long before Alexander came,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Hindu monarchs reigned in pomp and power. In later days, still ancient as our newer races count antiquity, Mohammedan and other empires have reared themselves on the ruins of the old, and at last we, first represented by little bands of merchant adventurers, are become the heirs of all.

There is no story written that is more thrilling than that of the toils and triumphs of the British in India, but it is not our purpose even to attempt to tell it here. There are pages in the story, of course, that we might well wish to have expunged ; but, on the whole, it is a worthy record, and one of which we have no reason to be ashamed. The position of to-day has been gained, not by craft and fraud, but by sacrifice and suffering. We never set out to win an empire, though it has come. But the great possession has cost a great price ; and many a life-story in India,



THE MUTINY MEMORIAL WELL, AT CAWNPORE.

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

whether of the obscure or well-known man, might well be summed up in the words of that noble line on the tomb of Henry Lawrence in the Residency garden at Lucknow : ' He tried to do his duty.'

To-day the statesman finds in India some of the most absorbing problems that can occupy his attention, and to many of these British rule is affording a remarkable solution. It displays a great variety of method and a great power of adaptation to the needs of the many races of the continent. The British Government has gone to a length not often realized at home in placing matters of internal administration in capable native hands, as in the outstanding case of the Mysore State, which has long been restored to its Indian rulers.

The merchant knows that here is one of the great markets of the world, the imports and exports of which together

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

amount to over a hundred and fifty millions sterling per annum. He knows, too, that it is a market that calls for the closest attention, if Great Britain is to retain its predominant importance there.

It hardly matters what field is represented by the man of science, India will afford a sufficiently large, interesting, and perplexing field for his investigations.

The lover of his kind will be touched by the condition of the masses of the people. They know sufferings, privations, and calamities which are such that it seems as though anything that a Government can do can touch them but in a slight degree ; while the earnest Christian will see in these three hundred millions of his fellow subjects an opportunity for evangelistic effort hardly to be surpassed anywhere in extent, and not to be surpassed at all in importance. The final victory of the Cross must depend very largely on that

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

of Christian missions amongst the awakening and intelligent races of our Indian Empire.

In the brief chapters which make up this book we do not propose to enter into any discussion on the matters we have here named. We would, however, remind those who read these pages that, behind the interesting and picturesque detail of everyday life in India, there lie great questions of race and religion and empire, ever with us, a background of much shadow and mystery still.

We will close this introductory chapter with a word as to the spirit which, we believe, does largely actuate those who have the responsibilities of government in India. They are often much abused, perhaps because their task is little understood. It is no light thing to have to rule all these millions on the despotic basis of taxation without representation,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

but India is not yet past the need for a benevolent autocracy. It is no light thing to have to live and work as foreigners, ruling where we cannot colonize. It is no light thing to have to deal with the colossal calamities of famine and of pestilence, which have so horribly desolated the land and impoverished the people. But the English in India are making a good fight of it. There are some things still with us we cannot but believe would be best brought to an end, but on the whole our rulers strive to do the right thing and to hold the balance even amongst those of many races and religions. To expect constant and universal success is to expect too much, and we must try to be content with men who endeavour to do the best they can. Perhaps we cannot leave this subject better than by quoting the eloquent words of one of the best known of the rulers of India, and one of the most deter-

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

mined and independent of them all, spoken as he was at last laying down the heavy burden of responsibility. Here they are :

‘ A hundred times in India have I said to myself, Oh that to every Englishman in this country, as he ends his work, might be truthfully applied the phrase, “Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity.” No man has, I believe, ever served India faithfully of whom that could not be said. All other triumphs are tinsel and sham. Perhaps there are few of us who make anything but a poor approximation to that ideal. But let it be our ideal all the same. To fight for the right, to abhor the imperfect, the unjust, or the mean, to swerve neither to the right hand nor to the left, to care nothing for flattery or applause or odium or abuse—it is so easy to have any of them in India; never to let your enthusiasm be soured or your courage grow dim,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

but to remember that the Almighty has placed your hand on the greatest of His ploughs, in whose furrow the nations of the future are germinating and taking shape, to drive the blade a little forward in your time, and to feel that somewhere among these millions you have left a little justice or happiness or prosperity, a sense of manliness or moral dignity, a spring of patriotism, a dawn of intellectual enlightenment, or a stirring of duty where it did not before exist,—that is enough, that is the Englishman's justification in India. It is good enough for his watchword while he is here, for his epitaph when he is gone. I have worked for no other aim. Let India be my judge.'

Those are words worth reading again and again, that their full force and beauty may be felt. They are those of Lord Curzon, and they have the ring of deep and manly sincerity. They were spoken

WHY INDIA INTERESTS US

to men of business and of government, and we may surely say that though the men who are actuated by such feelings and ambitions may often err in judgement and be mistaken in action, the interests of India will be fairly safe in their hands, and by them we may hope still to hold our Empire in the East.

II

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

A city of contrasts—Dirt and devotion—The god shop—The bed of spikes—A modest charity—Sacrifices to the goddess Kali—The crematorium—The Hindu heaven and hell—The god-maker and his child—The religion of the mass—A bygone disgrace to the British name.

A MORNING walk in the capital city of our Indian Empire affords a series of contrasts sufficiently startling to satisfy the most exacting mind. The elevating and progressive instincts of the modern age are here engaged in a stern struggle with the tenacious conservatism of the ignorant masses of the people, and, spite of all the resources of civilization, they cannot be said, as yet, to fairly claim the victory.

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

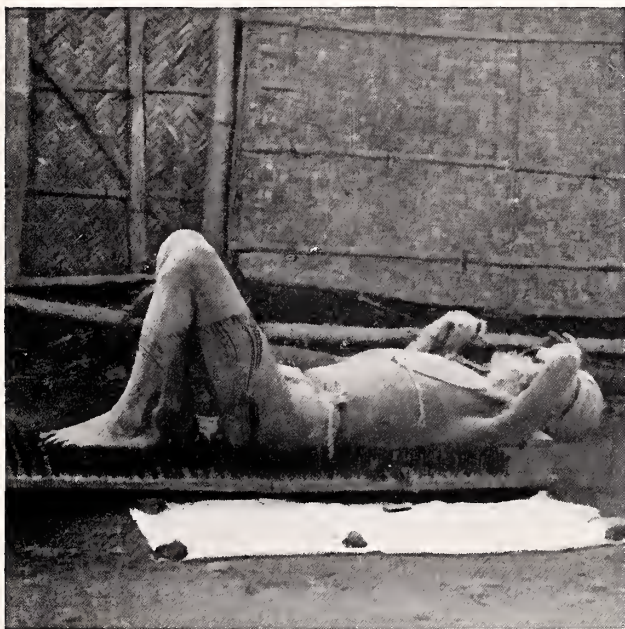
It is not the purpose of this chapter to deal with these peculiar contrasts, but merely to describe some of the strange and old-world sights which may be seen, on almost any morning of the year, as we walk through one crowded quarter of this busy city. The locality to which we go is that in which we find the famous temple of the goddess Kali, the chief object of popular adoration here.

We start away from our own excellent mission premises, and find ourselves in a few moments on one of the finest streets of the city, broad and beautiful. Here everything breathes of civilization. We take our seats in the electric tram, and are soon swiftly passing by clubs and stores and mansions, and, at last, by the Anglican cathedral, an architectural blending of Salisbury spire and a railway terminus. Then we pass suddenly into another world. The tram runs on, but

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

it seems sadly out of place in the purely native and peculiarly squalid surroundings of this latter stage of our journey. We are in what is called the *bazaar*, a long street teeming with Indian life, intensely busy with many branches of petty trade, and picturesque in spite of all its squalor.

We leave the tram at a side lane, down which we see that many turn, and find ourselves at once in a region of stagnant pools and open drains, which convey the most alarming warnings to the olfactory nerves ; while as for the moral and spiritual atmosphere, almost the first building to which we come is a god shop, where a large and striking selection of popular divinities may be obtained on the most reasonable terms, at from a farthing apiece upwards. At a little distance up the path we find an admiring group gathered about a most holy person, who lies by the wayside. There generally appears to be an intimate



THE BED OF SPIKES.



SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

connexion, in India, between dirt and devotion, so far as the popular religion is concerned. So it is here, for this saintly person, with his matted hair, is a particularly filthy object, and is clothed in very little beyond the sacred ashes which are well rubbed into his skin. The triumph of his piety lies in the fact that he reposes, day and night, upon a bed of spikes. We examine this luxurious arrangement with some care, and can certify that there is no deception, and that the spikes have, to quote a suggestive phrase, the 'business ends' upwards.' Though so pious, he is an extremely disobliging old man, and the inevitable snapshot is taken under difficulties. But a crabbed piety is not the monopoly of any particular form of faith.

A few yards farther on we come to one of the most important of the shrines of this locality, and here we always find women as the principal devotees. It is dedicated

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

to Siva, and it is enough to say that it is a phallic temple. The symbol of the god is a rough-hewn lump of stone, in a pit at the feet of the worshippers, and upon it they sprinkle water from the sacred stream. Some of these women are childless, or at least sonless, and they hope that their devotion here may so far win the favour of the great Siva that they may be blessed with the children they desire.

We now pass through a lane of afflicted and miserable beggars to the largest temple. The beggars lie down, spread a cloth for charity, after the manner of the holy man we have just seen, and then calmly await events. An extremely modest generosity, in no way calculated to harm the recipients, usually rewards their faith. In the temple court we come to sights and sounds which are somewhat revolting, for this is the place of sacrifice. Modern prejudices and British law do not allow of the sacrifices of children,



THE MORNING BATH.

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

and goats are killed in considerable numbers in order to propitiate the fierce goddess Kali. We have often seen the sacrifice. It is not cruel ; a rough but efficient contrivance is used to grip the neck of the animal, and one swift blow does the work. But it is an unpleasant sight, and the temple court becomes a horrid place as the morning wears on. It is not good to write about, but it is well that it should be known how miserable and degraded a worship popular Hinduism is. Just outside the temple is a goat market, and here stand long rows of the victims, waiting till somebody shall buy them for the sacrifice. Concerning the great deity herself, her reputation and her achievements, perhaps the less said the better.

Close by the temple is the sacred stream. Here, through the morning hours, we see picturesque groups of bathers ; men and women mingling at this sacred and salutary

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

ceremony with a good deal of freedom ; and here, sometimes, we may see the aged, drawing to the last hour, brought down to die, that from such a spot they may rise to certain bliss. Even an Englishman might hope for heaven if he expired at so sacred a place as this.

There is need of any comfort that such an assurance can bring to surviving friends as we pass the portals of the place where the bodies of the departed are burned. On the left hand, as we enter, there is a very powerful piece of modelling, standing out in bold relief. It depicts the torments which fall to the illdoer in the lower world. Yama, the dread god of death, stands at the entrance of the place of punishment. Within, demons are busy, with cheerful alacrity, sawing one sinner asunder ; another offender is on his knees, while his hideous tormentors pour a ceaseless stream of molten metal down his throat ; and

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

others are cruelly torturing a little child. It is only fair to say that a corresponding panel on the right gives a view of celestial joys. But these appear to be wholly musical, and are of such a nature that they too suggest little but torture to the Western mind. Within the walled enclosure, all who care to do so may see the primitive process of cremation. The gruesome sight and the overpowering smell of roasting flesh do not tempt us to linger here.

We must now turn homeward, for, though we call this the 'cold weather,' it gets uncomfortably warm in the Indian sun. There is but one more sight which shall call for our special attention, but this is well worth a few words. It is that of a Hindu artificer in the act of making a god. The image is made of a framework of sticks, covered skilfully with tightly bound straw, and then very neatly

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

finished with soft mud. When it has well dried, the painter and decorator gets to work, and produces wonderful effects ; and then, if the idol is for a great house and a great festival, the final touches are added by the milliner and the jeweller. On the right of the workman is a portion of an image, in the stage of straw. On the left are the ruins of several more. In front of him stands the idol he has nearly finished, so that here you have a man actually making his own divinity ! One can hardly see all this sinful folly without thinking of those vivid chapters in the prophecy of Isaiah in which this supreme stupidity is held up to scorn. The sight is as painful as it is interesting, and we turn homeward with sad and solemn thoughts concerning the millions of India, so wholly given over to idolatry. But there sits a bright-faced little maiden in the verandah of the god-maker's house. We

SAINTS, SHRINES, AND DEITIES

may never be able to do much with those who, like the old workman, have long reached the years of discretion, but have never laid hold of it. Our hope is largely for those for whom the little child in the corner may stand. In Calcutta and in many other parts of India we are, not without happy result, doing all that we can to lead them from darkness to light.

We have seen nothing in our walk to remind us of the nobility and the wisdom and the beauty of Hinduism, of which we sometimes hear so much. It is not that these things do not exist, but they are within the knowledge only of the few. The religion of the mass is as we have pictured it, except that it is worse. In its basest and most degrading manifestations it cannot be described, for very shame. In these viler forms it is not merely an offence against God, but also a scandal to mankind.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

It is not pleasant to remember that in bygone days the English in India pursued a policy in regard to Hinduism of the most mischievous kind. Mr. Ward, the Baptist missionary, wrote in the earliest years of the nineteenth century that on a certain occasion a deputation from the Government had proceeded to Kalighat, 'the most opulent and popular shrine of the metropolis,' and had there presented to the idol the sum of five thousand rupees, or five hundred pounds, in the name of the Company, for the success that had recently attended the British arms!

III

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

Religion and common life—The temple of Kali—
Spiritual insurances—Henry Martyn's pagoda—
The idolater on wheels—The idol-car and its use
—The Jains and their beautiful temple—Degenerate
Buddhism.

WE find that in India religion is interwoven to a remarkable degree with the warp and woof of common life. In his own particular way the Hindu succeeds in effecting that combination which the Christian preacher is so often urging on his enlightened hearers in other lands. But the trouble is that the religion involved is of such a character that it neither illumines nor elevates the sphere with which it comes in contact. For the mass

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

of which we speak life has no such lofty content as it has for us, and religion is often but a debased and confusing superstition. A city full of temples may be one of the vilest spots on the earth, and a country abounding in places of pious pilgrimage is not necessarily a holy land. In India a great ceremonial sacredness can lie cheek by jowl with unbridled wickedness, and it oftentimes does.

But we take the happier combination that commonly exists as a hopeful possibility of better things. Touched by a divine hand, it may lead to a nobler type of faith than that to which we are accustomed in Christian lands to-day. We take the frequent shrine and the constant religious observance, however ignorant it may be, as witnesses to a deep-rooted craving of the heart, which in the end will find its satisfaction in the noblest faith of all. Hindu *mandir* and Mohammedan

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

mosque, Jain temple and Buddhist shrine, all tell of a craving yet unsatisfied, and remind us of the yearning of humanity for the rest of the soul. The missionary does not go to the idolater with wrath and threatening ; he does go to say : ‘ Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you.’

Bengal does not contain by any means the best and worthiest specimens of Indian temples. Those are in the distant south or the farther north. And the capital of the empire, though it is an ancient centre of the Hindu faith, is in such particulars beneath contempt. The city takes its name from the notorious goddess Kali, the wife of the dreaded Siva, and she has a famous temple there. But it is a poor and squalid place, and one cannot but feel that the wealthy Hindus of Bengal have not treated this famous home of devotion with the generosity of faith. It is not

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

needful to dwell again upon this spot and its surroundings, for they have been already described.

The Kali temple is surrounded with smaller shrines, which may be considered as side-shows of a catch-penny character. One of these is quite a pantheon, and offers the worshipper an astonishing variety of choice as to the particular object of his devotions. Some will endeavour to effect a sort of spiritual insurance by giving impartial attention to all, and paying a trifling premium at every reasonable opportunity. These judicious persons are usually either pilgrims who have travelled far and wish to miss nothing, or mere holiday-keepers who are 'making a day of it.' The poor Hindu does at least know how to combine devotion and delight for one brief day. That which follows, however, sees him a sadder and a poorer man, though he can hardly be said to be a wiser one.



A GROUP OF HINDU IDOLS.

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

Along the banks of the sacred stream there are views well worthy of a painter's brush. They are at their best on a warm and sunny winter's morning (winter is warm there and summer is unspeakable), or perhaps as the evening shadows begin to lengthen. But all this is of small interest to the mild Hindu. To him this is merely one of those favoured spots from which the dying soul *must* go straight to paradise, and therefore the banks are lined with little temples and convenient bathing steps, all of which add to the picturesque character of the scene. Some of these temples are deserted, and others are but the private possessions of some Indian family. One of these, now in quite a ruinous state, on the banks of the Hughli, has a certain sacredness for ourselves, for it was once occupied by Henry Martyn. The idol had gone out of this fairly capacious building, and the young missionary was

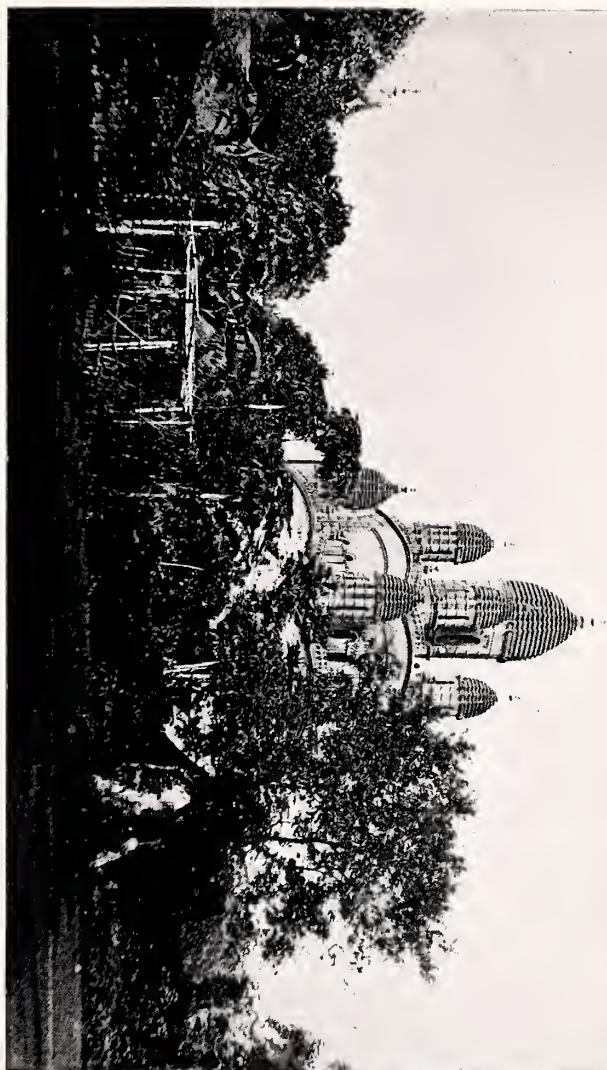
EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

permitted to go in. He made it his oratory, and it is said that it was also the place in which he carried on, for a time, his translation of the Word of God. It is now nearly destroyed by the encroaching stream.

Another picture will give an idea of a better type of temple architecture in Bengal. This is a fine old building at Tollyganj, near Calcutta, the history of which would be of no particular interest to the reader. But it is given as a far more striking type of building and one more generally Indian. We see very few new temples built, and not much is done by way of repairing the old, so that, if Hinduism were to be judged by its temples, it might be supposed to be in a state of serious decay.

The way in which educated and intelligent men will encourage and even participate in idol worship is most remarkable. We do not so much wonder at the tolerant attitude assumed by some who themselves

A HINDU TEMPLE NEAR CALCUTTA.



TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

are not idolaters. They say that what is not good for them is good for the poor and ignorant masses, as bringing religion down to the meanest capacity. But many of them personally bow down and worship dumb idols. We well know a little wayside temple, of a sort very common in Bengal. It is on a main road, in one of our mission stations, and is a tiny building, just big enough for the idol and the worshipper. The god is not an image, but the peculiar block of stone called the *lingam*, the sign that this is a temple of the god Siva. As the writer was passing along the road one evening he saw standing at the door a tricycle belonging to a Bengali, a keen and prosperous man of business and quite a progressive person. But when the spot was reached it was found that the babu, as we should call him, was bending low before the idol, stripped to the waist, and performing the offices of worship, with

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

every sign of deep and true devotion. Without stood the latest thing from Coventry, the symbol of all that was up-to-date, while within its owner and rider was prostrating himself before a lump of stone. The sight of the cycling idolater was one to impress the mind. It was another curious combination of incongruous things, peculiarly Indian.

It is considered a work of peculiar piety to build a block of seven temples, especially upon the banks of a holy river. They sometimes form very picturesque features of the landscape, as they lie, beautiful for situation, and embosomed in the luxuriant foliage of the waterside. Many of these groups, having once been built as works of piety, are afterwards put to little use, while they are sometimes allowed to decay, for it is said that there is no merit to be gained by the repairing of such buildings.

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

Before we turn away from the subject of Hindu temples we may speak of one of a kind which has not yet been named. This is an idol-car, which is really a traveling temple, and, when in use, it is as sacred as any other to the native mind. It stands by in seclusion, and sometimes in neglect, for the greater part of the year, but it is brought forth with pomp and circumstance on the great days of festival, to be the chariot of some popular god. It is adorned (if that is the correct word) with a number of grotesque figures, of a symbolical sort, and with pictorial achievements of a very bold and striking character. On this particular car they are comparatively unobjectionable, but they are sometimes unutterably vile, though they are perpetrated in the name of religion. Indeed, there is a section of the penal code, directed against downright obscenity, which has its exceptions in favour of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

cars, and temples, and other things connected with worship! It is a very sad comment on the morality of a religion that it should need the shelter of such an exception to the law. On the great day the dummy horses will be seen in position, and the dummy coachman on his perch above. Then the god is dragged to his place at the top of the car; Brahmins man the platforms; and amid a scene of the wildest excitement the idol is dragged through the town by hundreds of willing hands. In Bengal the deity usually selected for this dignity is the one best known in England as 'Juggernaut,' really Jagannath, 'Lord of the world.'

There are a few temples in the city of Calcutta belonging to a sect of which very little is heard outside India—the Jains. One of the buildings is of a most striking character, situated in the midst of an ornamental garden of a very fantastic

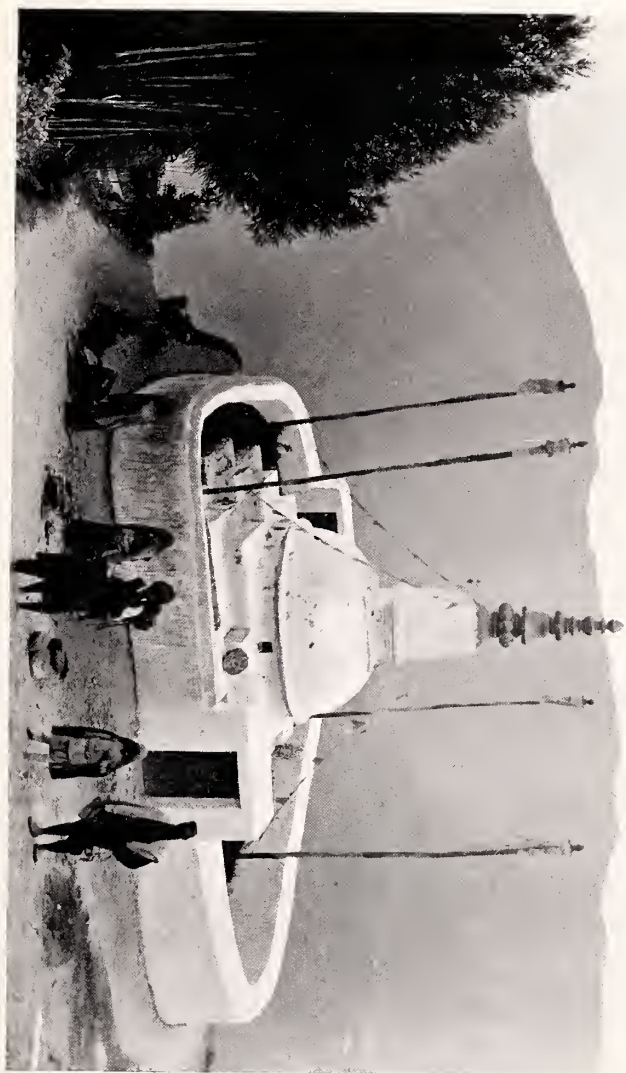
TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

kind. The Jains are a people whose beliefs and books show that there is a close relation between them and the Buddhists, who are not now to be found in Hindustan properly so called. But they do not own their indebtedness to or kinship with Buddhism, and it is only in some few important points that they now manifest the original likeness. There are many disciples of this faith in North India, and yet more in the western part of the country, and they form a pushing, enterprising class of business people. Their great tenet is to the effect that regard for life is the highest virtue. To such an extent do they carry their notions that some of them strain all water before drinking it ; sweep the ground with a brush before treading on it ; never eat in the dark ; and even wear muslin before the mouth, after the manner of a respirator, lest they should swallow some minute unfortunate and

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

so bring themselves into condemnation. They profess that their religion has a respectable antiquity, one alone of the long series of its ancient heroes having lived 8,400,000 years ! They now pay respectful devotion to some of the Hindu gods, and may be regarded as an unorthodox Hindu sect.

Dr. Rhys Davids says that it is now certain that the Jain community existed before the time of Buddha, and that below the surface resemblances, which show some relationship with Buddhism, there are deep and irreconcilable differences. To the Jain almost everything that is conceivable enshrines a soul. The Buddhist theory 'is put together without the hypothesis of a soul at all.' It is very difficult to conduct any argument with a Jain, for his great philosophical theory is *Syâd-vâda*, which permits of affirmation and yet negation of one and the same



A BUDDHIST DAGOBA, DARJEELING.

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

proposition, such as that of the eternity of the world. This pleasant refuge is apt to cause some perplexity to an opponent.

We said that Buddhism was extinct in India proper. But some interesting memorials of that ancient faith remain in Bengal, and there is one spot in particular to which Buddhist pilgrims come. This is Budh-Gya, where the holy man himself is said to have received enlightenment. But on the fringes of the hills in the north, over against the border of Tibet, we have many Buddhists—of a sort—among our fellow subjects. Their religion is of a most degraded type, and has about as much to do with demonism as with Buddhism. Their priests are ignorant, dirty, and lazy, and the people conform to the pattern very faithfully. The chief temple is a filthy place, into which one cannot go without need of a subsequent fumigation. There is nothing

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

romantic there. Huge prayer wheels stand at the entrance, by the turning of which it is believed that much merit can be obtained, and the inside of the place reminds one, in its furnishings, of a little Romish shrine. Pictures and images, and lights upon the altar, all are there, and there is the pungent smell of a not very fragrant incense. It is a place that one is glad not to have missed, but which can be left without the sadness of farewell. But one cannot escape the sorrow of the fact that this gross, degraded, and unspiritual faith should be the one refuge of so many souls. The Buddhists of Ceylon and Burma would not countenance their brethren here. The building shown in the picture is not a temple, but a *dagoba*, a solid structure built over some relic, such as a bit of the nail-parings of some ancient saint, or possibly a splinter of bone that once

TEMPLES AND SACRED SPOTS

belonged to one of the apostles of the faith.

We have said nothing at all about the religion which stands second only to Hinduism in the number of its adherents—the Mohammedan. Its sacred spots do not lie in this direction, nor do its nobler shrines. But we hope to have something to say as to the Musalmans and their ways in another chapter.

IV

IN THE BAZAAR

What the word means—Methods of bargaining—The delight of a wrangle—Ladies who smoked the ‘hubble-bubble’—The opium shop—The Government and the distillery—The primary school—The Christian book shop and the open-air service.

THE word ‘bazaar’ is by no means an unfamiliar one to English ears ; but the place that is spoken of at the head of this chapter is of necessity very unfamiliar indeed. It has only a remote connexion with that successful financial device which is so often the last resource of the perplexed superintendent, the burdensome anxiety of his better half, and the dread of those who are undesirous to accumulate a large collection of super-

IN THE BAZAAR

fluous articles at an exorbitant price. The Indian bazaar is simply the main street, or one of the main streets, of the town, and it is the centre of all interests, public and more openly domestic, for all the little world around.

There is a narrow and somewhat crooked street in Calcutta, known as Old China Bazaar, which once enjoyed widespread fame. Visitors from all parts of the world were taken to see this curiously busy centre, where merchandise of almost every description could be obtained. Amongst the dealers would be always found a good number of Chinamen, very keen business men. Not a generation ago the European and Eurasian ladies of the city used to flock to this narrow and dirty street, on bargains bent, and it was a matter of no small pride to be able to do good business there. It was of no use being in haste. The quarry had perhaps to be hunted

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

from shop to shop. The dealer received much assistance in overhauling his wares. The buyer would sit down, on a chair not altogether above suspicion as to insect life, near the open front of the den which answered as a shop, and then the contest would wax warm. After but a very little experience mere man would get very weary of the whole business, and perhaps woman got weary too, but she was soon at it again with renewed zest. To him the strife of tongues and of wits and the long and tiring bargaining became intolerable, but it was understood that to her it was as the wine of life. The man would generally prove a poor creature in the matter of bargaining, but his better half would probably be quite a fair match for Ah Sing, the Chinaman, and for Ram Chandra, the Bengali, too. A morning or an afternoon soon slipped away in China Bazaar, especially if the country cousin,



A TYPICAL BENGALI BAZAAR.



A SHOPKEEPER AT KURSEONG.

IN THE BAZAAR

with many needs, formed one of the party. But the glories of the place have departed with the rise of European stores, and it is now a very ordinary and unexciting spot indeed. Still, this old street was not quite *the* Indian bazaar, which is purely a native affair.

We give an illustration of a typical Bengali bazaar. It is one of the chief arteries of a flourishing native town, and is a busy place ; but this is not its busiest part, and it is a quiet hour. A great deal of traffic of the bullock-cart order passes constantly through, and the windowless establishments on the right are some of the highly respectable shops of the town. There is a momentary pause in the street while the photographer, who is a patiently tolerated person, takes his picture, otherwise we have a fair idea of what the average bazaar really is like.

Now and again we come to what is more

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

properly a market, and there business is attended to with a keenness which leaves little to be desired. Sharp indeed are the trials of skill between the buyer and the seller ; and the contest, which is always counted upon, seems to add a real zest to life. It is expected that there should be haggling and bargaining, and life would be little worth living without it. If the buyer bought at his own price, or the seller got the sum he asked, there would be all the sadness of the lost opportunity left to rankle in the mind of the Aryan brother. Why had he not offered less, or demanded more ? We may often see the contesting parties eagerly and noisily debating as to the exact price of a few farthings' worth of goods.

We spoke of the shops in the bazaar. They are usually poor little affairs from our point of view ; but in some of them a good deal of business is done, and many

IN THE BAZAAR

a man has made his modest fortune in a dirty little shanty, with no window in front, and with a stock that we should regard with disdain. In India, as elsewhere, one soon becomes familiar with things that at first seem extremely strange, and one might profitably record his first impressions, 'not necessarily for publication,' but for the refreshing of the mind in later days.

There, in front of an open shop, sits a man engaged in dressmaking ! He is not too generously clothed, and shows a good deal of brown skin ; but he is a skilful workman, and he sits rapidly working away at one of the latest of Singer's treadle sewing machines ! It is a curious mixture of the old and the new, but a very common one. Then we pass a shop showing nothing but long rows of black and shining cocoanut shells, scooped out, drilled with holes, and fitted with the stems of the hookahs,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

or water pipes, which are smoked by almost every Bengali. There was a time, it may be whispered, when English ladies, at the dinner-parties of long ago, used to take a whiff from the 'hubble-bubble' of a favoured swain ; for English gentlemen then sometimes smoked the hookah and carried a spare silver mouthpiece for the fairer sex. But they did not patronize the humble cocoanut shell. Now we pass a rice store, with its huge and well-stuffed bags, and a cloth shop, filled with goods from Manchester and Germany. There sits a portly Bengali babu, of enormous girth, oleaginous sleekness, and scanty raiment, making up, in all publicity, the books of the firm of 'Banurji, Mukerji, & Friend, Merchants of Europe and Country Cloths.' It is of no use attempting a full list of the many and curious trades represented here. Shops for the sale of brass ware, and shops for the sale of jewellery,

IN THE BAZAAR

musical instrument shops, sweetmeat shops, and others with an astonishing variety of small and useful imported goods of every description, fill the bazaar. We give a picture, from a place in the hills, which may give some idea of the style of one of those extremely general shops. Here, it appears, you can buy pictures of the gods, cups and saucers, brass utensils, tin trunks, piece goods, lucifer matches, and nearly everything else that anybody would ever be likely to ask for.

But here is an establishment of quite another description. It is a common object of the bazaar. Many people at home have a curious idea of the opium shop. It is thought to be a luxurious den of vice, with all kinds of attractive adjuncts of temptation. But this dilapidated place is a fair example of the poverty and squalidity of the average drug shop. The old smoking-dens are not licensed now. Here you buy

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the crude article, in brown and pasty lumps ; and here you can also buy *ganja*, the maddening product of the hemp plant, from which the Government derives a considerable revenue. The small stock of drugs is kept well within the shop, and some dealers put a stout railing between themselves and the customer. Opium is a Government monopoly in India, and it is a source of revenue of which some of us are heartily ashamed. We do not suffer in India so sadly and so generally from the evil of the thing as do the Chinese ; but we wish our hands were washed clean of the whole business.

Our bazaar will probably contain another mark of advanced civilization in the shape of a liquor shop. Here will be sold imported spirits, for the qualities of whisky and brandy are becoming pretty generally known in India. A large quantity of country-made spirit is consumed, but so

IN THE BAZAAR

is a great deal of the imported article. Much of it is poor rubbish brought from Germany in the form of a very crude white spirit, and then doctored in Calcutta, or some such place, till it appears upon the market as a popular beverage with a taking label and a catchy name. Here again is a source of public revenue which one cannot contemplate with comfort. We once looked in at a liquor shop in an Indian bazaar in which a thriving business was going on. It was also a distillery on a small scale, and we were told that this dirty little place paid not far short of a thousand pounds a year to the revenue authorities. The proprietor saw that this was too much for our faith, and so he produced his Government receipts in corroboration of his statement. It was true, and it seemed to us very shocking.

There will probably be in the bazaar worse places than the drink shop. They

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

may be hidden down a narrow lane ; but they are just as likely, in some localities, to be unblushingly upon the public street. And there will be better things, such as the elementary school, where a patient old man, with pains and labour, in the most hopelessly out-of-date manner in the world, and in the midst of an intolerable din of repetition, is endeavouring to instil knowledge into the youthful but not eager mind. A sanded floor will form the first copybook for his hopeful scholars, and upon this they will trace their letters, after which they will in due course be promoted to long palm-leaf strips, which will, in turn, give way to the occidental slate. This man is a Hindu, but he is miserably poor, and he may possibly allow us to send in a Christian teacher for a few hours in the week, if we grant him a small subsidy.

There is another bazaar scene which we must not forget. It is a place to which

IN THE BAZAAR

the Christian preachers frequently and statedly resort. There will be here a well, and there a shady tree, and these will be placed upon the 'plan.' Sometimes we shall find in the bazaar a Christian book shop, stocked with Bibles and a good assortment of other literature. This will be one of our points of vantage, and at any of these spots a small band of workers will gather at eventide, and with song and speech they will draw, and generally hold, a crowd of listeners. It is a free-and-easy sort of service, and there are interruptions ; but they are not often vicious ones, and some are very welcome. Here the young missionary gets some of his early chances and makes some of his amazing blunders. It is astonishing with what politeness a crowd will listen to the absurdity that the novice must sometimes of necessity perpetrate. As long as a slight difference of sound makes a great difference of meaning

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

such mistakes must be, and good Christian people will still be described occasionally to a Bengali crowd as the potatoes of the world, when the preacher only means to say, with St. Paul, that they are lights in the midst of it. Whatever may be the exact value of the widely extended open-air work, it must be done ; for it is the only way in which many of the people can be reached at all. So we are glad to know that it is now true of many of the bazaars of India, that the Christian preacher is by no means their least familiar sight, nor the message of the gospel their least familiar sound.

V

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

How the house is planned—Domestic servants—A strange system, working well—The punkawalla—Why English children are sent home—The missionary's child and heathen worship—The snakes and other common pests—The daily round of life.

TO those who are a little weary of the daily round of domestic details in the English home we can cordially recommend the novel experiences of Indian life. Those who desire an infinite variety will find it there. Those who pine for a genial warmth will know abundant bliss ; while others, with a turn for natural history, will find in snakes, scorpions, lizards, ants, and mosquitoes a never-failing source of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

interest and delight. Those who feel that the proper study of mankind is man will be able to greatly enlarge the field of experience, and the only fear is that in some of these directions the opportunity may be even greater than the adventurer would desire.

The Indian house, in construction and in every possible arrangement, is an entirely different thing from anything to which we are accustomed here at home. It is generally built in a very solid manner, with walls calculated to keep out the heat. Every bedroom has its own particular bathroom ; there is no such thing as a kitchen or a fireplace in the house, and, generally, everything is on the one floor. We speak, of course, of the ordinary Bengal bungalow. In the cities ground is far too valuable to allow of such methods of building, and we rise floor above floor, as at home. But still we have the same lavish provision for the daily ‘ tub.’

THE ACROBAT AT A COUNTRY BUNGALOW.



ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

The plan of the typical house is an extremely simple one. A large central room runs through from front to back. An arched or pillared division will probably hint at a separation of this into dining and drawing room. From this large hall two or three rooms open out on each side, and a deep verandah runs nearly round the whole. The kitchen and stable and the servants' quarters will be somewhere at the edge of the compound, so that the dinner has time to cool as it comes to the house, and the sahib is not tempted to inquire too closely into the dark mysteries of the cook-room. When the thermometer reaches a state of undue exaltation the house becomes uncommonly like an oven, and in many stations there is little relief even at night. By day the place is almost hermetically sealed, because of the heat without ; and by night you will probably endeavour to sleep out of doors, to escape

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the heat within. This, of course, is only at the worst time of the year. The European visitor, who finds the country so full of charm, generally misses these particular delights, for he is careful to come at the wrong time. It should be said that we build with flat roofs, so that these sometimes afford an evening refuge, and form safer sleeping-places than the compound below. Down there jackals are sometimes unpleasantly near neighbours, and creatures much more objectionable and dangerous are by no means unknown.

The system of domestic service is well worth a passing word. It appears to the bewildered visitor that the retinue of servants is remarkably large, and extravagantly so. It is large, indeed, but it does not follow that it is extravagant, and many a returned Anglo-Indian has sighed for something like the smoothly

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

working machinery of his former home. Indian servants, as a rule, will only do one branch of the work of the house, and so it comes to pass that a person who in England would employ but one or two good servants may have to deal in India with ten or a dozen. But in Bengal the average wage will not reach fourteen shillings a month, a sum out of which the recipients manage to feed and clothe themselves and their families, and often to save a little money ! A self-respecting cook will not come to the table, and the table-servant will not sweep a room. None of the men who do any of these things, in a house of any size, will wash up the dishes, and it is the business of quite another kind of person to carry water from the well to the house ; while the sweeper or scavenger would not be permitted to have anything to do with any loftier labour than his own. And so it

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

is with other departments of household toil. The system works very well, and it is more than the European can do to upset it. If he should try, a sort of vigorous trades unionism will preserve the ancient order, and prove far too strong for him. But it will be seen that many hands make light work, whilst all these retainers get very little money and a great deal of rest. And the work is so strictly departmental that if anything is ill done it is easy to fix the responsibility on the proper person. It must be remembered that some of the servants there stand for what is represented by water pipes and by sanitary systems at home. Some Europeans complain bitterly of the Indian domestic. But we have been fortunate enough, in some of these cases, to hear the other side, and observation shows that a good master can generally get servants who will treat him well.

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

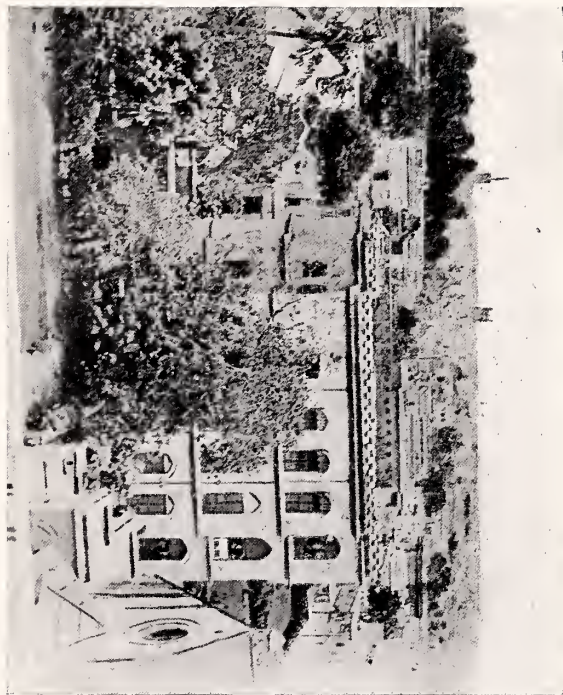
There is in India no convenient and familiar tradesman's cart ministering to daily needs. Every morning somebody must go off to the bazaar, to purchase what is needful for the day. Generally this service is cheerfully performed by the cook, who feels himself justified, by immemorial custom, in charging a modest, or comparatively modest, commission on all that he buys. This is a rule so well established that he still feels himself a man of honour, and would much resent an insinuation that this was not quite the thing to do. This commission, in moderate cases, is probably worth as much to him as his wage. In some cases, especially in the cities, the housewife herself ventures to the bazaar, and has at least the satisfaction of having tried to do her best; but in the country places the servant, in these matters, is the master. Fowls and ducks, at very low prices, form the staple

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

food in such localities, so far as flesh meat is concerned, and one's bread may come by parcels post ; while in the big towns we may live much as at home. English people have an erroneous idea as to the delicious and abundant character of some of our Indian products. Lord Macaulay once said, with special reference to the Calcutta he knew so well, that all the fruits of the tropics were not worth a pottle of Covent Garden strawberries, and that a lodging up three pairs of stairs in London was better than a palace in Chowringhee. This, however, is only as true as such sweeping statements usually are. We could name one or two things which it would be hard to beat, even at Covent Garden.

One of our most valuable domestics, during eight months of the year, is the humble punkawalla. From every ceiling is suspended the long swinging fan, fringed

THE TOWN HOUSE.



ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

with holland or with strips of grass matting, without which most Europeans can hardly work, eat, or live. Many cannot sleep without it at night. The punkawalla is certainly the most useful agitator in Bengal, and it is his business to sit out on a verandah at the far end of the rope and keep the punka swinging through the hot and weary hours. The motion of the air just makes life tolerable ; but it will be readily imagined that the performer himself, who has no one to keep him cool, and is but human, falls a victim to a sleepiness which is somewhat irritating to his master. His is an occupation which leaves the mind free to grapple with great subjects, but we have never yet heard of a punkawalla who has risen to the opportunity. In the cities the electric fan is rapidly dispossessing our drowsy fellow creatures.

English children have a fairly pleasant time of it in North India for the first few

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

years of their lives, provided that they are naturally of good constitution. Everybody is kind to them. The servants will do anything for them, and the ayah is one of the most important persons in the household. A good ayah is good indeed, and is by no means rare. One could not desire a better nurse than such a woman makes, and one or two of the best we have known have been native Christians. The trouble with children comes when the mind begins to open freely to all surrounding influences. Then there is no knowing what may be mischievously learned from those who mean to do no harm. That is one of the reasons why children are hurried home to England. The moral atmosphere of India is quite as dangerous as the material, and the most watchful care is required. Not long ago a Bengal missionary found his tiny girl in the bathroom, standing in the water, solemnly going

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

through the curious little ceremonies of Hindu worship, as she had seen the ayah do, and ending up with libations to an unknown god.

There are some things connected with Indian life which seem to appeal very powerfully to our friends at home, of which we do not think a great deal when we are there. It is a country of abundant life, and we have to do with a large variety of unpleasant creatures. Wild beasts we need not consider, for they are rarely troublesome to us, except in the most remote situations. But snakes are ever with us. Even in the well-kept city we have seen and killed a very few, while in the places outside they abound. We have the most deadly varieties of them round about us, but we sleep in peace. Each year, chiefly in the rainy season, a few will probably be found within most of our country houses. A letter from one of our

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

mission stations says: 'We have had a rare time with snakes. Two were killed on Saturday. One monster escaped on Sunday, and a small one was killed. On Monday we killed two, and one was seen on Tuesday.' But it is only right to say that this is a somewhat unique experience. The mortality from snakebite in India runs to about twenty thousand cases a year. But it is a rare thing for a European to be killed. The barefooted and barelegged native falls an easy victim to the angry reptile, and the circumstances of native life are constant conditions of danger. But at night, when the sahib is sitting on his verandah, in the thinnest of raiment, ready for bed, he too is at a disadvantage when the alarm is raised. Our fox-terriers are our best friends, giving a peculiar cry of warning, and prudently and retiringly holding the enemy in play. Occasionally the cobra or the *karait* makes

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

his escape, which leaves an uncomfortable sense of incompleteness in the mind, and some fear lest he should call again. We have known a *karait* drop from over a doorway upon a servant's turban and glide away down his clothing, without doing any harm, and we have also known of a big cobra being found comfortably stretched under a chest of drawers in the bedroom, just as the household was about to retire for the night. When a box has been opened to take out a book, or a tent unrolled for an airing, the first thing to appear has been a deadly snake. Yet one gets so used to these dangers that they do not greatly impress the mind. You learn to go to no dark corner without a light, and to take a lantern with you in your evening walks ; and you may perhaps, in a strange bed, just turn the pillows back to make sure that all is right before you get in, while if ever you do set eyes on a snake

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

you do your best to slay him. Happily, he is about the most vulnerable creature that exists.

In some of our stations scorpions abound. Their bite is not a fatal one, except in rare cases ; but it is an extremely undesirable experience, and it is not a frequent one. Perhaps the tiny mosquito is the most annoying enemy of all. He is everywhere, and always persistent. Most of us become immune in time against all but the very vicious varieties. But some residents are all their lifetime subject to bondage, and find this tiny pest an endless torment. But the white ants are among our saddest tribulations. It is well to remember that they are not really ants at all, a fact which removes an intolerable stigma from an honourable name. These wretched creatures will devour your boxes, books, clothes, roof timbers, furniture, anything almost but stone and steel. They

ROUND ABOUT THE HOUSE

form one of the omnipresent plagues of Oriental humanity. They will so eat out the inside of a treasured volume, leaving the shell all but intact, that it is not until you go one day to lift it from the shelf, and find your fingers crackling through the outer crust, that you realize what has happened.

Visitors are very much shocked to see four-inch lizards running about on the dining-room and bedroom walls. But these are wholly harmless, and are among our good and useful friends, although it must be confessed that appearances are somewhat against them.

The life of the Indian household begins early in the day. A cup of tea and a slice or two of toast set one going in the morning, and a good deal of work is often done, especially in the outside stations, before breakfast. In the warm weather the back of the day's work is broken by eleven or

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

twelve o'clock, and the hot and weary sahib, who began at five, gets home to the bath and breakfast. Then comes quiet office work, and perhaps an hour's sleep may be permitted in the afternoon. There follows a cup of tea and whatever occupations, of work or recreation, may fill the earlier evening hour. Then comes dinner, and a calm and quiet hour for study, chat, or chess, before the time for rest. But it sometimes happens that swarms of insects, winged ants or green flies, carry the verandah by storm, and drive you off to bed before your time, there to slumber as peacefully as the heat, the punkawalla, and the mosquito will permit you to do. When things get too bad indoors you may take a camp bed to the *chabutra*, a circular brick platform in the middle of the garden, and there, under the blinking stars, you may find the rest denied within when the long, long Indian day is done.

VI

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

On the main line, and off—The bad old-fashioned way
—The camel cart—His Majesty's mail—Adventures
on the road—The 'push-push'—Palankin, bullock
cart, and green boat—Darjeeling and its great
disaster.

TO the cold-weather visitor to India, speeding through the land in well appointed mail-trains, with dining-cars, sleeping-berths, and all the mitigations of discomfort that can be provided, the delights of travel may be very real. This is largely owing to the fact that our judicious friend chooses his time wisely ; for while in the north we have a pleasant winter climate, at any other time of year there is nothing that can make journeying a de-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

light. But it has to be done, and that sometimes at the risk of life itself, for never a year passes but a few, at least, are stricken down on the rail routes by the overpowering heat. A most excellent dictionary, under the sorrowful word 'travail,' gives various meanings of pain and toil and care, and then goes on to say that "travel" is the same word in another form.' That is a statement which is well supported by experience as well as by philology in our Indian Empire.

The traveller is all right on the main lines of rail, and in some of the cities he will find his needs met by an excellent service of electric trams ; but when he gets out of the cities and off the track of steel and finds himself committed to the tender mercies of the *dak-gari* and the bullock cart, of the palankin and the 'push-push,' then his lot is not a happy one, and he is inclined, with all his heart, to endorse the dictionary.

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

We will imagine ourselves once again taking a most familiar journey, to an important town lying well off the beaten track. We must take it in the good old-fashioned way, for memory knows nothing of the railway which has lately reached the spot and ended all such troubles, so far as that particular place is concerned. The story is typical of much that is still considered very fair travelling in India.

We begin with a swift and easy journey from the capital, doing over one hundred and twenty miles in just over three hours. But then our troubles commence. Thirty miles of road are left, and they are miles of great tribulation. We have known the European traveller avail himself in an emergency of the camel cart, a somewhat remarkable contrivance, consisting of a ramshackle two-storied conveyance, foul and ill smelling, drawn by a pair of the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

shambling and malodorous creatures from which the conveyance derives its name. Such an experience is one not to be forgotten, for the camel is a peculiarly objectionable beast. But the usual method of locomotion has been the Bengali equivalent of the postchaise. This is the *dak-gari*, which runs with the mails, or it may be what the proprietor proudly calls the *e-special*, running solely for private use, the 'special' nature of which is kept up by its being specially slow and specially bad in every possible respect. It has been known to do thirty miles in from eight to nine hours, when the roads and rivers have been particularly vile. It is a wretched little box on wheels, drawn by two miserable ponies of the smallest proportions, driven by a more miserable driver, and containing from one to four passengers, most miserable of all. The ponies will display the most alarming indifference to the interests of



HIS MAJESTY'S MAIL.

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

the traveller, who will occasionally be on the road, helping to keep the machine from capsizing during their gambols, or literally putting his shoulder to the wheel. This will be when the animals refuse to move at all. Sometimes, while he is engaged in this pleasant occupation, they suddenly tear off at top speed, and it is with the utmost difficulty that the agile adventurer, after a most striking and perilous gymnastic exhibition, regains his seat in the flying chariot. It is by the mail that we elect to travel. The two chief rivers on the route are unbridged, and one of them is about half a mile wide, so that we have here another source of diversion. Our ponies are changed for big bullocks, when the ford will allow of such a crossing, and we go lumbering along our weary way much as their majesties the oxen please. They have a playful way of sticking fast when we are helplessly placed in the deepest

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

part of the stream, and obstinately refusing to go on. The driver tries terms of endearment and terms of abuse (the latter greatly preponderating in his vocabulary); he tries kicking and poking and beating; and then, as a last and always successful resource, he gently but firmly twists the tail of the offender. This agonizing attention is effectual, and on we go. One river is nearly thirty miles from the other, and we may sometimes get safely over the first, in the rainy season, and find on approaching the second, four or five hours later, that a flood is rising, and that neither cart nor boat can cross, so that we may have to wait, as we have known men to have to do, for twenty-four or thirty-six hours before the brief home stretch can be attacked. There is no getting forward or backward, and one has to find the friendly shelter of the village police outpost, and let patience have her perfect work. When

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

we are really on the road, such little vexations as the breaking of the string with which the harness has been oftentimes repaired, or the flying of a tire from the wheel of the cart, form trifling incidents which relieve the bare monotony of the way. On great occasions, such as a wedding or the holding of a Synod in such a station as that of which we speak, we may see quite a small procession of these delightful conveyances, and the varied experiences of the travellers are most entertaining to those to whom they have the charm of novelty. But to those who have long been familiar with such experiences they become more purgatorial as the years go by.

Another curious vehicle in which travellers upon one of our main roads do a good deal of their journeying is called the 'push-push,' a term which sufficiently explains the theory of propulsion. It is

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

a plain and practical box, on two wheels, into which the unhappy traveller packs himself and his smaller belongings as well as he can, by way of preparation for a journey of about sixty miles. He is trundled along for this distance by muscular coolies, who manage, by the aid of fairly frequent changes, to get along at a very good rate, for Bengal. But this princely method of progression does not satisfy the modern mind, and some enterprising people are putting a service of motor cars upon the road. The 'push-push' cannot long fight the motor car, so that the old order will soon give place to the new.

Another centre in rural Bengal is reached, after infinite pains, by a conveyance of somewhat the same order as that which has been described at length. But the ponies are smaller still, and the conveyance is smaller too. In this tiny affair

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

two Englishmen of fair size and weight may have to spend eight hours in doing forty miles, and they will feel that they have not done badly. One man nearly fills the thing, with a handbag and a rug ; while two find it a most serious business to pack in at all. But the cheerful Bengali considers that the *gari* was built for four, and that number of his own race will be jammed in without compunction. As for the ponies, they do stages of about fifteen miles, and they often do well under five miles an hour. On this same journey the wayfarer will sometimes use the bicycle for the portion of the road which is in moderately good condition, and then borrow an elephant from a friendly *zemindar*, or landlord, and so finish his journey in considerable state. The motion of the elephant is not altogether conducive to comfort for the unaccustomed traveller, but the dignity is sublime.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

The palankin, or *palki*, is still largely in use in the East. In the cities it is used chiefly by the natives. In the places outside a missionary lady sometimes finds it the best means of getting over bad roads and unbridged streams, in order to reach an out-of-the-way spot. Occasionally when the Englishman himself is cornered for conveyance, or is not so well as he might be, he uses this primitive affair. It is not pleasant to be carried along by your fellow creatures, but it sometimes becomes needful. The carriers go at a slow ambling trot, and they beguile the hours with suggestive chants as to the weight and the dignity and the generosity of the admirable passenger, venturing the assurance that according to the weight of that heavy load of opulent and kind-hearted humanity so their reward will be. Alas, that the song should so often fall upon ears that are unimpressed !

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

Then there is the bullock cart. This primitive conveyance may be covered in and fitted with a bed, and many a man rolls on through the night, in far Bengal, in this slow and springless vehicle, trying to sleep and tumbling restlessly with bruised and aching bones. It would not be so serious on a good road, but the roads are execrably bad, and occasionally the whole thing goes blundering into a broad ditch and scrambling out again, *usually* without capsizing. A spice of interest is added to this sort of travelling by such adventures as that which befell a friend of ours a short time ago, when he was awakened in the middle of the night by a sudden stop on a jungle road. On putting out his head to inquire and to protest, he found that a leopard was sitting in the moonlit path, apparently uncertain whether to attack the oxen or the driver. Providentially, the noise

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

of another party approaching scared the animal ; but such experiences are not wholly delightful.

There is not space to more than mention some of our minor methods of progression. In a part of the country farther east you travel up some of the steeps in a sort of box on a man's back. In the hill stations you are drawn along very comfortably in a heavy form of rickshaw, or carried shoulder high, by Nepalese or Lepcha coolies, in what is called a 'dandy.' This is a conveyance much used by ladies and by invalids, and once you have got used to the rocking unsteadiness it is all right, so long as no coolie tumbles down and no pole breaks. But these things do happen.

Another of the things to be named is the 'green boat.' A man who works along a river-bank, or for other reasons has to travel up and down the streams, can do



THE GREEN BOAT.

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

so in much comfort in this light and picturesque craft. But it is a slow business, and he needs an easy and a contented mind. It was thus that William Carey used to make his daily journeys to Calcutta and back when he lived at Serampore and acted as Professor of Oriental Studies at the College of Fort William in Calcutta. It would not suit a busy man to-day.

In conclusion, we will go back for a moment to the railway lines. It must not be supposed that all things are as one would wish, even here. We have a line near Calcutta which sometimes conveys its passengers at the reckless rate of ten miles an hour. This is really a dangerous speed, because the next train is faster, and it would be a serious thing to have a collision from behind. But it is on the Himalayan railway that we get most enjoyment and most excitement. The journey up to Darjeeling is, under

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

favourable circumstances, a delight indeed. The cooler air refreshes the jaded dweller in the sultry plains, and the glorious views fill the mind with a sense of the deepest satisfaction. The mere engineering of the line is a perpetual wonder, and altogether the journey is one of the utmost interest. But in the rainy season it is a different matter. You are seldom sure whether you are going to get through at all. A landslip will upset all your well-laid plans, and you may have to wait a day or two, or to journey home again. Twenty inches of rain in twenty-four hours works havoc on the hillsides, and the line is sometimes carried away in long sections. We have waited *in the train* for the completion of repairs to the broken line, and then crept, trembling, over the new and shaky road. Once, after a tremendous rain and appalling destruction, we were detained ten days in the hills.

THE DELIGHTS OF TRAVEL

Then great mountain-sides were swept down, while the broken railway lines hung like bits of steel wire down into the abysses. At last we had to scramble down by such roads as were repaired, and join what was left of the line twenty miles down the mountain-sides. Yet, though the rail creeps along so many precipitous and winding ways, no serious accident has ever happened to its passengers. On the whole, spite of many tribulations of the passing hour, it is pleasant to recall these memories of bygone days. Their bitterness, such as it was, is past.

VII

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Christmas in Calcutta — The public morning 'dip' —
Riverside scenes and roadside occupations —
Leprous beggars — The funeral party — The Church
and the School — Hinduism now losing ground.

THERE is no part of the world where the first impressions of the new arrival are more interesting than they are in India. The strange faces, the peculiar dress, the curious occupations are not more remarkable there than in many another unfamiliar land ; but the Englishman in India moves amidst it all with a sense of personal concern and almost of proprietorship which adds interest to everything.

A BENGAL HIGHWAY.



IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Should the traveller leave these shores at the height of the travelling season, he would probably arrive in Calcutta in good time for the Christmas festival. He might well count himself happy at escaping the cold and fog and general discomfort of the winter here, and for a few brief weeks he might count himself in an earthly paradise. Christmas comes in the midst of our open-air enjoyments in India. At this season, for instance, he would find cricket matches in full swing, because for a little space we have a truce with our adversary the sun, and are able to face his still sufficiently genial rays the whole day through. And this is the time for picnics. We have a delightful Botanical Garden on the river-bank, a few miles below the city, which is the favourite spot for all such social diversions; and it is to this place that most of the European Sunday schools betake themselves for the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

annual excursion. And the Christmas time of Bengal is not at all unlike the best English midsummer that can be imagined. It is difficult sometimes, in the pleasant glades of that park-like garden, to believe that we are at such a distance from the old home. The Christmas party is a great occasion, but it cannot be the family reunion in India that it is here ; it is rather the grouping of a circle of companions in exile, who try, for a few brief hours, to keep up the old fashions, and to make believe that they are quite at home. The native largely accepts and enjoys the holiday, with the very dimmest notion of what it may mean, and he judiciously takes the opportunity of sending propitiatory presents to his European superiors. These are but of a trifling character, and take the form of articles calculated to appeal to the organs of digestion. These tokens of goodwill are generally accepted,

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

and then, with more prudence than courage, quietly passed on to somebody who is better pleased with them than is the original recipient. He dreads experiments himself, but does not object to letting others try them.

There is no season of the year at which outdoor life does not abound in interest and variety. At any time if you turn out for a morning walk and go towards the river, which means so much to a native city, you find the banks alive with people who have gone to the stream for the semi-ceremonial bath. It is really worth pausing to watch those picturesque groups of people engaged in the extremely public dip. Although there is what would be for a European much scantiness in the matter of dress, yet decently and quietly they proceed, washing and worshipping, and forming pictures which must give pleasure to the artistic eye. The toilet of little

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

children is largely a matter of merely getting dry again ; the women go dragging home in clinging garments, wringing wet ; while lordly man, with much ingenuity, manages to make himself conspicuously comfortable on the river-bank, and then goes home ready for the duties of the day. These people owe very little to the resources and conveniences of modern life, and behave much as their fathers did a thousand years ago. The river itself is full of life. There is the ferry-boat, sometimes scandalously overladen ; the picturesque and dirty dinghy, the passenger craft of the stream, with its two or three boatmen looking, we may charitably hope, a great deal more villanous than they are ; and there is the fine sweep of shipping, of craft of all nations, lying at anchor in the busy port.

The road is as interesting as the river. It is not quite the thing in London to sit

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

down on the side-walk at some convenient street corner, or at the garden gate, for the morning shave. But here it is the commonest of sights. Some classes of the poorer people would scarcely ever do otherwise. Down sits the victim (for victim he is), and down sits the barber. No soap is thrown away on the operation ; a little water is rubbed on, and the face is well scraped, then the armpits, and the work is done. Then may follow five minutes upon the kerbstone, while the teeth are publicly cleaned with much vigour and determination and with much spluttering, with the frayed-out end of a bit of stick. As you walk on you may see a man giving himself a bath under the vigorous spouting of a street hydrant, and you may meet a few professionally holy people who, apparently, never take a bath at all. Here you may see a pious pilgrim visiting the sacred spots for

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the salvation of his soul, and patiently travelling at the amazing pace, not of ten miles to the hour, but of ten hours to the mile ; and that is a good rate too, for his particular method of progression. He measures his length upon the ground, marks the spot to which he can reach, rises, steps forward to the mark, and then goes down again. Here, by the wayside, sits the *methai-walla*, or sweet-seller, whose modest and mysterious stock is a centre of great attraction—to the flies, who seem to be his most constant and almost his only customers ; and there, disquietingly near to him, sits a leper, with open sores, begging for his bread, and passing on the coppers that he receives into the ordinary channels of public trade. This last spectacle does sometimes arouse even the apathetic residents of an Indian city to a little brief and ineffective indignation.

What is this little group that we see



THE FUNERAL PYRE.



THE ITINERANT BARBER.

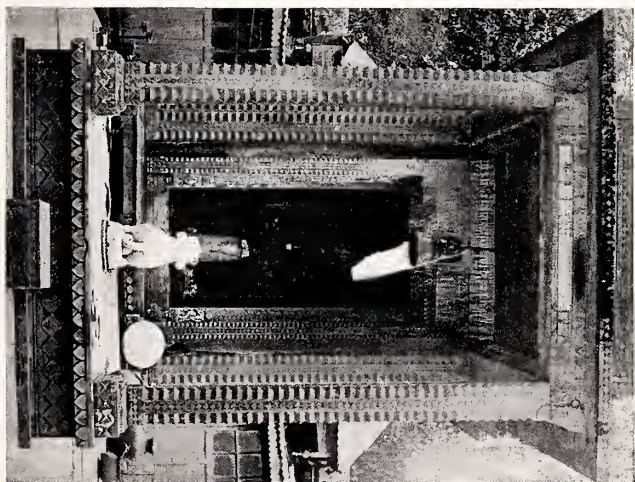
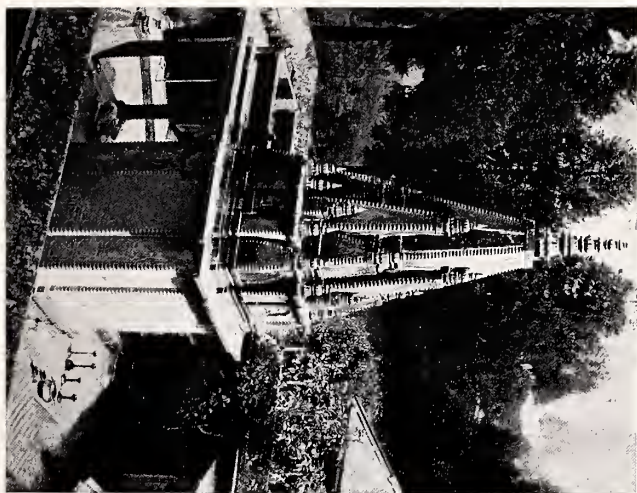
IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

passing down the centre of the road at a loose, shambling trot? Four of them carry a light litter, and we hardly need to ask what that may be which is stretched upon it, covered with a thin white cloth. This is evidently a funeral party, making its way, not to the cemetery, but to the burning ghat. That frame which lies upon the bier will probably not yet have stiffened with the rigor of death, so swiftly do the last scenes succeed each other here. Just as the cemeteries are open to the public in England, so are the burning-grounds here. Sometimes, as at Benares, the fire is kindled upon the river-bank, within no enclosure at all; and in out-of-the-way places the last rites are performed on some sandy island in the midst of a stream. One of our pictures will give an idea of the simplicity of the Indian method of cremation. Here a shallow pit is dug in a walled court by the waterside. Wood

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

is purchased to the value of about four shillings and sixpence. Some of this is laid in the pit, and the body placed upon it, with the legs doubled back at the knees. More wood is then piled upon the top, and, with some appropriate ceremonies, the fire is kindled. The ashes are afterwards thrown into the sacred waters. The body of a wealthy man is usually treated in much the same manner, except that the funeral pyre is of costly sandal-wood, and all is on a much more expensive scale.

In highways and byways we have the constant reminder of that religiousness which lies at the back of the Hindu mind. We can never travel far, amongst the abodes of men, without passing the temple door, and temples are often to be found in spots in which it must usually be hard indeed to find a worshipper. The building is generally but a small one, with room



EXTERIOR AND INTERIOR OF A PRIVATE TEMPLE, KUSEONG.

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

only for the priest and the worshipper ; and we are able to give two illustrations, showing the interior and the exterior of one of these simple shrines. This is a perfect specimen, and stands in a walled enclosure at the side of the road. It is really the private property of a wealthy man, and it was not easy to get a good photograph of the interior. But it was managed one day when the priest was away, and that without trespassing. It is quite a typical little bit of Bengal temple architecture, and the picture of the interior shows clearly the chief accompaniments of worship. It is a temple of Siva, as may at once be seen by the presence of the sacred bull, which is the chosen steed of that particular divinity. Just beyond the bull will be seen a stone tapering like a sugar-loaf, having a broader stone at its base. This is the *lingam-yoni*, the commonest of sacred objects ; a symbol of deity which

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

is simply a survival of the phallic worship of antiquity. On the top of the *lingam* lies a small wreath of white flowers, and above it hangs a brass vessel, showing darkly in the picture, which is kept ever filled with water from the Ganges. In this case it has to be brought two hundred and fifty miles. At the bottom of the brass vessel is a very tiny hole, and through this the sacred water is always dripping upon the stone below. The flag that flies above, attached to the bell, is nothing more important than the priest's *jaran*, or duster. This is, internally, the most common form of temple, but there are many which contain, instead, the image of an extremely hideous god.

It is still the day of the Hindu temple in Bengal. But another day is coming. Already on many a busy highway stands the Christian sanctuary, and there is to be heard the frequent voice of the herald of

IN HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

the Cross. And in many a byway, far from the crowded city, amidst a simple village life, there is set up the little Christian school. Patient, plodding, determined men, European and Indian, and faithful women too, are quietly pushing on the work. And the results of it are now becoming manifestly important as the religion of Christ is seen to be that which prevails more rapidly than any other. Hinduism, according to census returns, has positively lost ground at last. The day is coming when the Christian Church shall be as universal as is the Hindu shrine to-day. The land which is the home of ancient superstition shall yet become a stronghold of pure and holy faith. We have in India an unspeakably great possession. Let us do our duty by its people in the highest things of all.

VIII

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

62,000,000 of them—Musalman missionaries—Laxity of faith and practice in Bengal—Eastern eclecticism—The five ‘points’—The feast of Ramazan—Waiting for the new moon—The Mohurrum festival—Bitter sectarian strife—The great processions—The Musalmans of the household.

ABOUT half of the Mohammedans of India are to be found in the province of Bengal. There are more than 62,000,000 of them in the empire ; but they are very much outnumbered by the Hindus, who are returned at no less than 207,000,000. There was a time when it seemed as though the militant faith of the Prophet would be all-prevailing ; but its bright prospects were never realized,

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

and at the beginning of the last century the Hindus were decidedly getting the upper hand. At that juncture the English power assumed a new importance, and it proved that neither the Hindu nor the Musalman was to be the conqueror. Islam first touched India, in the shape of an Arab expedition to the Bombay coast, about the middle of the seventh century ; and it only abandoned its last hope in the failure of the Mutiny of nearly fifty years ago. Its stirring history is worthy of a more graphic pen than has ever yet been employed upon it. It is a wonderful story of enterprise and success, of magnificence and power, of sordid selfishness and cruel treachery. But not even the briefest sketch can be attempted here.

In 1203 the invaders reached Lower Bengal. One of the generals of Mohammed of Ghor, an Afghan warrior, seized the capital, and delivered his final blow

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

with such suddenness that his Bengali majesty was surprised at his dining-table, and fled shoeless by the back door. He escaped to Puri, and devoted the rest of his days to the worship of Jagannath, a divinity who certainly had not treated him over well. The British in Bengal succeeded to the power of the Moham-medans of a different race nearly six hundred years afterwards.

A fairly vigorous propaganda is always being carried on by the Musalmans in this province. The work is largely done by itinerant preachers, who do a great deal of open-air campaigning, and a very common sight in one of the public squares in Calcutta is that of the fervid Moham-medan orator. He is often a strikingly patriarchal figure, and he will perhaps have a much larger congregation than the Christian evangelist in another part of the same square. This is largely because

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

he is surrounded by a good company of his own co-religionists, who sit in an orderly and attentive circle round him, while the merely curious (who form the bulk of the congregation of the Christian preacher) stand around. Hinduism does not concern itself with any attempts at conversion. It does occasionally and quietly absorb a certain number of willing conformists, but that is all. Islam sometimes produces a zealous and fiery missionary, who is quite a popular revivalist in his own peculiar way. And so the religion makes some real progress in the province. It is, of course, a great inducement to the reception of such a faith by the lower orders of the people that it promises to set them free from the restrictions imposed by caste, and to elevate them considerably in the social scale. Every teacher of a monotheistic faith will find that these considerations have weight with

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

certain classes of the people, and will measure his real success accordingly.

The ordinary Bengali Musalman is a very different person from the Arab or Turk, and he holds his faith much more loosely than does even the Indian of the farther north. Indeed, the stricter believer would hardly acknowledge the lax Mohammedan of Bengal as a brother at all. Occasionally even he awakes to a brief and fierce fanaticism ; but in general the relations between the adherents of the two popular faiths are very amicable indeed. Native observers of reputation tell us that the distance between them is lessening, and that the Hindu visits the holy places of Islam to do honour to the saints departed, while the Mohammedan supplements the often ineffectual devotions of orthodoxy by applying to the deities who dwell in Hindu shrines. It is said that the two parties have, in



A WAYSIDE MOSQUE.

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

some parts of Bengal, a common object of worship, which they are careful to call by different names, according to their prejudices ; the Hindu speaking of the shrine as that of a god, and the Musalman as that of a saint. We know, as they do, how far all this is from the faith of the Koran ; and the Mohammedans say that they do not *worship* such objects, but only *revere* them : an ineffectual distinction with which we are familiar nearer home. Now and again something occurs which brings the two faiths into sharp opposition ; then all the amity is forgotten, and the Hindu throws pig's blood upon the walls of the mosque, while the Musalman hastens to turn bullock into beef at the temple gate.

There are ' five points ' in more forms of faith than one. Those of Mohammedanism are prayer, ablution, study of the sacred book, pilgrimage, and fasting. To

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the first our friends are very attentive, although they do not always find it easy to say what the Arabic forms they use may mean. They are to be seen worshipping by the wayside at the appointed times of prayer, especially at sunset ; and if you have been calling at that hour at some house or office, to which you have driven, you will probably emerge to see your coachman, not on his box, but on the roof of the *gari*, absorbed in his devotions, bowing and standing and kneeling in turn, all in the orthodox way. It is well that the horses generally appear to be sympathetic, and to stand quietly and contentedly during this peculiar performance.

Ablution is no hardship in that climate, but very much the reverse. The Musalman, however, has to perform it according to curious prescriptions, and the general effect of the ceremony, just beneath your

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

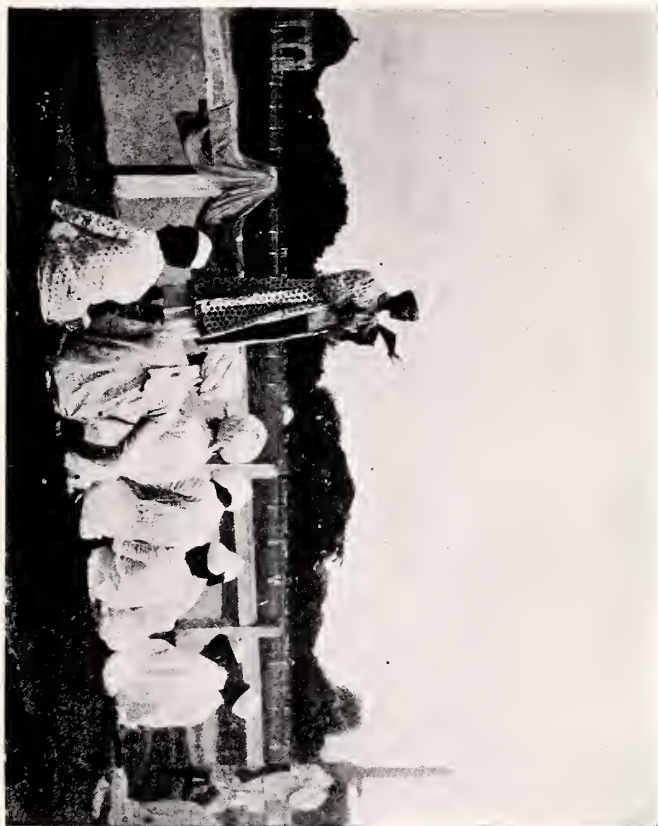
bedroom window at five o'clock in the morning, is not all that could be desired from the European point of view. But we are notoriously unsympathetic. The fifth point is attended to with some strictness ; while the third and fourth are left, generally speaking, to the industrious endeavours of professional persons. The fasts and feasts bulk largely in the life of the believer.

It may be of interest if we give some account of a few of these occasions. The great fast takes place in the month of Ramazan, the ninth of the year. The fast goes on for the whole month, but it is only to be observed in the daytime. It begins with the dawning light, as soon as one is able to distinguish a white thread from a black one, and lasts till evening. Not even water is allowed to pass the lips, except in special cases ; and it will be readily believed that, during that month,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

keen eyes are looking out for the sunset. The Musalman year is a lunar one ; so that, if a particular month commences this year with our October, it will begin next year in the latter part of our September, and in a few years it will be at the very hottest season, so that one may judge what this abstinence means. As far as can be seen, it is observed with much patient faithfulness, even by those who are not exemplary in some other points of religious practice. But when the night falls, the believer is at liberty to do as he likes ; so that, while the day is observed with religious rigour, the night is often a time of gluttony and general self-indulgence.

The first day of the next month is a time of great rejoicing. Anxious crowds watch for the thin line of the crescent moon on the eve of the festival ; for if it is not seen they may have to fast another day. When



A MOULVI READING THE KORAN.

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

the auspicious morning breaks, crowds go to the mosques, and for a time the police keep the neighbouring streets clear for the use of the overflow of worshippers, who form a striking sight. At all convenient spots groups gather at the wayside, near some place of ablution, to listen to the reading of the Koran. New clothes, of the gayest style, are much in evidence, and there is general rejoicing. This is the *Id-ul-Fitr* festival. There is another important festival, during which sacrifices are offered, and which is really a 'Day of Atonement,' and these were both instituted by the Prophet himself.

Another great observance, of later origin, is called the Mohurram, from the name of the month in which it is celebrated. The ten days of the Mohurram are perhaps the greatest days of all the year to the faithful. Deeds of charity are done, and there is general rejoicing. But the last

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

day stands by itself, and is kept as a day of mourning ; while the Shias, a large and important sect, make the whole period a time of lamentation. All this is in memory of the tragic death of the martyr Hosein, the grandson of the Prophet, at Kerbela, near the site of ancient Babylon, in the year 680. That story of tragedy is told even by European chroniclers in a manner that goes home to the heart ; but when it is recited by the fervid and fanatical Musalman in the ears of his excited fellow believers, the effect is profoundly deep and powerful. The two great sections of the community, the Shias and the Sunnis, are always in danger of serious collision during the processions of this festival ; and in Calcutta the most elaborate precautions are taken by the armed police, who can be reinforced, if necessary, in a short time by the military power. The danger is chiefly with the low-class and

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

popular processions, for which the streets are annually cleared. But a most impressive ceremony takes place on the morning of the last day. The streets are lined with costly Oriental flags, the traffic is suspended, and long lines of men, of a highly respectable class, pass by, beating their bare breasts, sometimes most severely, and reciting the story of sorrow. They lead a white horse, with arrows sticking in its trappings and with what stand for blood splashes upon its body, while there follows a coffin reverently carried, as though it contained the corpse of the hero whom they mourn. The whole of this 'passion play' forms a spectacle not easily to be forgotten.

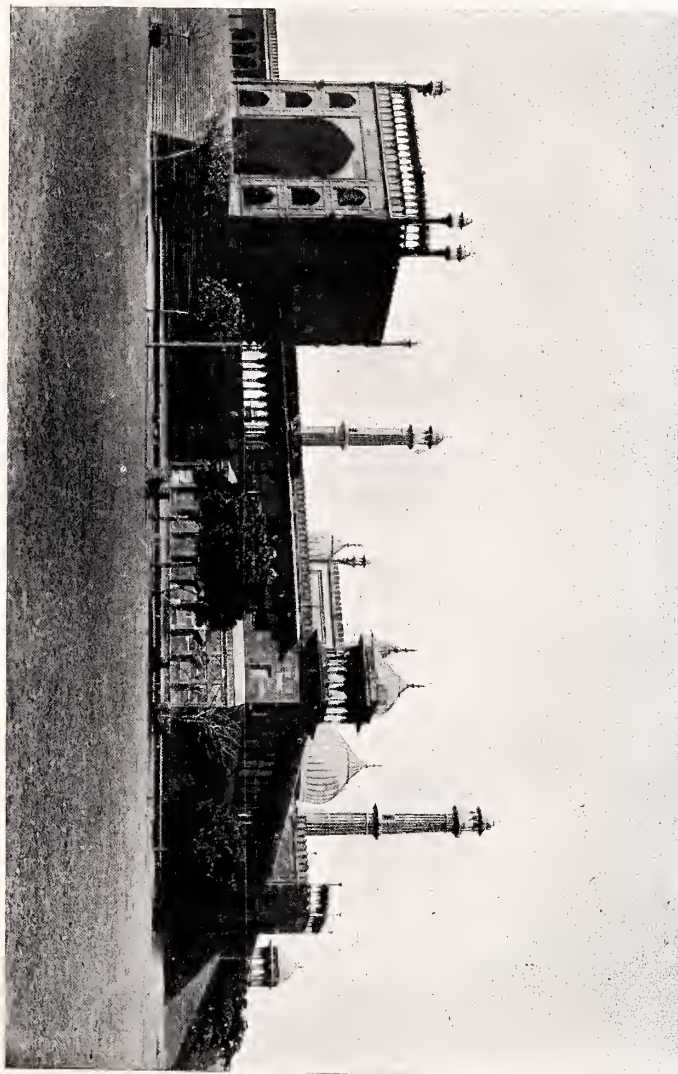
The Mohammedans of India are a backward people. There are men of light and leading among them, like the well-known Mr. Justice Amir Ali ; but the liberalism and culture of such a man are frowned

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

upon severely by the orthodox. There is a great Mohammedan school in Calcutta, founded by Warren Hastings, and conducted by the Government ; yet, while there is a modern side, the bulk of the students are those who simply take the courses of Oriental study and Islamic lore, which lead on to the position of the *Kazi*, learned in Musalman law and empowered to administer it, or of the *Moulvi*, or priest. The community grows because it does not bulk largely in official life, though it does very little to fit itself for its responsibilities. The condition of its womankind is deplorable.

We wish that we could introduce our readers, more worthily, to some of the common figures of daily life among these people. They are in every household. The venerable *dhirzi*, or tailor, sits all day on the verandah, with big spectacles and long beard and much patience, stitching

THE JUMMA MOSJID AT DELHI.



AMONG THE MUSALMANS

away at the garments of the ladies and the children. He is the universal dressmaker there. The excellent *khansama*, the man in charge of the table and some other domestic affairs, is a smart and capable servant, spotlessly arrayed, and generally a cheerful and willing man, with a fair share of dignity. The markets are full of Mohammedan traders, and they are excellent hands at a bargain, on Oriental principles, which are, for all things, much like those on which we sell a piece of land at home ; that is to say, for as much as we can get for it. When you know your man in India, and he knows you, you can do business very well. The big, burly trader from Cabul, a sort of tally-man, and a person whom nobody likes, stalks about like a giant among the puny people of Bengal, and occasionally thrashes his customers in order to facilitate the settlement of his account. The *gariwalla*, or

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

cab-driver, is a weird-looking and venturesome person, whose real instincts link him closely to his brother of London town, so much higher in the scale of civilization.

The stranger does not, as a rule, think well of these Indian people. But they improve on acquaintance, and one looks back upon a good deal of fairly happy association with them. There are the good and the bad amongst them, as with all communities, and there are some things among the Mohammedans peculiarly and unspeakably bad. But there is something that is good, and it is no small thing that there should be, in India, their great witness against the abominations of idolatry. The gospel is equal to hard cases, and it has met with some of its most striking triumphs in conflict with this stubborn foe. There are some who still believe that the power of Christianity cannot reach the Musalman ;

AMONG THE MUSALMANS

but the truth is, that some of the noblest champions of the Cross in India have been men who have forsaken the religion of Mohammed for that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

IX

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

Great Hindu festivals—Business blocked—The ‘Durga Puja’—Family reunion—The Jagannath procession—Former self-immolation—Christian preachers at the fair—A country festival—Opposition idols and quarrelling priests—Disturbing the swindlers—The hook-swinging ceremony.

OUR Indian fellow subjects have succeeded in satisfying two of the chief cravings of our humanity by effecting an ingenious combination of recreation and religion. The common people make the great festivals, which are all religious, their times of happy holiday, and it is sometimes a little difficult for the uninformed observer to see where the religion comes in. But it is there, such as it is,

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

and it sometimes serves as the occasion of some very curious proceedings. In our last chapter we gave an account of certain of the Mohammedan festivals, and we shall therefore give no further space to them ; nor shall we say much about the best known *pujas* of the Hindus, but rather try to give glimpses of the things done in the remoter parts of the country on occasions not quite so important.

There are, however, one or two of the greater festivals which must not be wholly ignored, for they are of much importance in the social economy of the Hindus. The people go in largely for religious festivity, and European men and methods have to bow to the customs of the land. The result is that men of business have to put up with a superfluity of public holidays, and sometimes for days together banks, mercantile offices, and Government departments are all fast closed, and the business of a

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

great city is at a standstill. It will be seen that the native who gets no weekly rest is not without his compensations, so far as they go.

The great occasion of the year is the *Durga Puja* ; and it is this which, above all, moves the sober soul of the stranger to indignation at the dislocation of business in general. The festival is devoted to the worship of the goddess whose name it bears, and it occupies much the same position of importance in the social life of the Hindus as the Christmas celebration does in our own. Durga is one of the consorts of the great god Siva, and she is considered to be a person of much beneficence. She is represented in her images as of ten-armed strength, and as being in the act of destroying her malevolent enemies. This is pre-eminently a domestic festival, and a well-to-do man will turn the inner court, open to the heaven, around which his house is built, into a temple

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

for the occasion. He will spend a large amount of money over the ceremonies, part of which will go to provide a new image of the goddess. This is built chiefly of bamboo and Ganges mud ; but it is decorated and finished off in a very striking and sometimes costly manner, and on the great days the temporary shrine will be open to the public. Our friend will then feed crowds of beggars, and engage the services of a band of musicians, of whom it is enough to say that they make up by abundance of noise for all they lack in skill. At this season every effort is made to secure the fullest family reunion, and it is a time of much rejoicing. At the close of the proceedings the goddess is supposed to leave the body she has condescended for a brief time to inhabit, and a procession is formed in order that the forsaken image may be carried away and thrown into the sacred stream.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

On another page, in connexion with a picture of an idol-car, we made a brief reference to another popular festival, that of the god Jagannath. The man who has once witnessed the proceedings of the great day of the feast will never forget them. At Serampore, near Calcutta, we have one of the chief centres of this worship, next in importance to Puri itself. There are three great days, and of these the greatest is that on which the idol is taken forth to bathe. The whole town assumes the aspect of a fair. The main roads are lined with temporary shops, doing a brisk business. Refreshment stalls and amusement booths are much in evidence, and, until the moment of the great ceremony of the day, religion appears to be quite a negligible quantity, if it be a quantity at all. It would be difficult, however, to give an adequate picture of the scene of wild and enthusiastic excitement when that



AN IDOL-CAR.

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

moment does come, and when the hideous god is lifted to the car ready for the journey to begin. That surging and excited crowd sends a sad message home to the Christian heart. The 'Car of Juggernaut,' to adopt a familiar etymology, still stands in some bursts of impassioned eloquence for any ponderous evil that crushes down the hopeful and the good. It is true enough that in olden days many a life was sacrificed beneath the wheels of the idol-car. Yet this was not in order that a bloodthirsty deity might be appeased, but that the sufferer might find a sure and speedy way to paradise. We have changed all that, but the festival remains. These great occasions give special opportunity for evangelistic work, and our preachers and teachers are always ready to make a wise use of them. A Christian book shop is sure to be one of the prominent features of the fair.

Leaving the busy haunts of men, let us

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

retire to the seclusion of the *majasil*, as we call the countryside. We will take our readers with us and try to revivify the scenes of a country festival. About fifteen miles from a Bengali mission house is a hill that is quite a remarkable object in a country so flat as Lower Bengal. It is really only fifteen hundred feet high; but it is quite the Mount Everest of that locality. Such a natural phenomenon is sure to be the abode of a dread deity, and the local god is Nara Singha, a fierce incarnation of Vishnu, who sprang from the heart of a marble column in order to destroy a defiant king.

At the foot of the hill is a spring, and this is made to flow into a large stone basin from a grotesquely carven spout. Here, once a year, the people of the neighbourhood hold high festival. Not far off stands a block of roughly chiselled stone, shapen into a sad caricature of a human

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

face. This represents the god, and it surpasses in ugliness anything of the kind we have ever seen, which is saying a good deal. Red paint, in much profusion, has to do duty for the blood of the sacrifice of a bygone day, and it is thought that the pleasant suggestiveness of that sanguinary colour may be a sufficient satisfaction to a divinity in greatly reduced circumstances.

As we make our way to the spot, it is evident that the festival is a popular one. The weather is warm, and we arrive in good time in the morning ; but many are ahead of us, and it is none too easily that we make our way to the centre of activity at the sacred spring. A big bazaar has suddenly sprung into being in this usually wild and deserted place. Traders of all sorts line the way, and the temporary town affords the spectacle of a modern feast of tabernacles. When we reach the shady grove of the spring an extraordinary scene

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

meets our eyes. In front of the basin hundreds of people are crowded together, pressing towards the waters. They believe that if they can only for a moment get fairly beneath the spout, that flowing stream will wash all their sins away. They struggle and fight with the utmost energy. Men and women, some holding poor little babes high above them, are pushing their way towards the goal, and as they reach it they form a wet and greasy mass of gratified humanity, its conscience eased of the burden of its sin. The horrible face carved on the spout looks like that of a grinning fiend, surveying a pandemonium.

As we draw near to the idol we behold a curious spectacle. The priests are the licensed plunderers of the people, and a group of them have evidently been receiving the gifts of the faithful. One man has attempted to take his place among them whose presence they most strongly

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

resent. They are determined that he shall go, and he is equally determined that he will stay. So here, before the face of the idol, and in full view of the waiting worshippers, the priests have a fine time of it. They yell, storm, and threaten; they wrestle, push, and pull; but the intruder will not go. The offerings of the people know a temporary cessation, while the holy men fight with might and main. At last the interloper establishes his right to recognition, and secures a corner of the platform and his share of the plunder too.

There are several opposition idols, of a very trumpery character, stuck up here and there, but they do not get much financial support. Now and again they receive a copper from some devotee who does not want to make any mistakes, and so tries to keep straight with all possible powers.

But we did not really come here merely

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

to see the festival ; so we look out for the preaching band, for on these occasions also we generally get excellent openings for the doing of our chief work, and we always find a fair market for the sale of portions of the Scriptures. There are, of course, peculiar disadvantages connected with all the excitement and confusion, but there are peculiar opportunities too.

As we pass through the fair, on the way to breakfast, we see little groups of gamblers busily pursuing their occupation. In this far corner of the earth they are carrying on some of the very tricks of the racecourse cheat at home. Most of the business seems to be of the thimble-rigging and three-card game order. We find the people easily gulled, and venture to disturb the peace of some of the performers and to drive them away. At last, to their great satisfaction, we go off ourselves. But it is only to interview the police, and to

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

explain to them that if they do not get the better of their temporary blindness we shall report them at head quarters. The result is that we are reinforced, and, cautiously returning, we make a successful raid, and capture more or less of the stock-in-trade of eight or nine parties of swindlers, while the offenders themselves are permitted to go free. This little affair puts us on better terms with the people, and the gospel in no way suffers from the fact that we have introduced the arm of the law. But we do not find a universal welcome. As the day wears on, business proves a little slack in the temporary bazaar, and it is whispered that it is because the god is offended at our presence. One man says, 'You speak of Jesus Christ. It is all very well, but I cannot sell my onions.' But we do not leave till evening, and our best and quietest work is done at the close of the day.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

It is a surprise to some people to learn that the horrible institution of the hook-swinging festival still survives in India. But it flourishes in some backward parts of Bengal, and is practised, at some of their great observances, by the Santals. One of our missionaries awoke one morning not long ago to find the poles and platform for the ceremony being erected in front of the mission house, and only just beyond our boundary. He was quite unable to prevent the horror for that occasion, and could only take steps to make its repetition there impossible. The victims, who are swung on high, suspended by hooks run through the muscles of the back, are most cheerful volunteers ; and the scars of those who have swung again and again are a source of considerable pride to those who bear them. Great crowds throng to see the hook-swinging, and it is said that powerful musicians are ready to drown



A HOLIDAY CROWD.



A VILLAGE CHRISTIAN FESTIVAL NEAR CALCUTTA.

SOME FESTIVAL SCENES

any cries of pain that may escape the sufferer. Such are some of the religious diversions of India.

We cannot refrain from adding another picture. It does not call for detailed explanation ; but shows that the heathen do not have things all their own way. It is a photograph of one of our Christian festivals, a sort of camp-meeting held in a village near Calcutta. It is one that brings back a happy memory, and gives welcome stimulus to an inspiring hope.

X

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

The Andaman Islands, and where they are—Ten thousand convicts—Comparative freedom—Convict marriages—Viper Island—A ferocious prisoner—Assassination of Lord Mayo—The industries of the islands—European prisoners formerly sent there—The aboriginal tribes, and efforts to help them—The trade in edible birds' nests—Dying races of mankind.

IN the distant East, where the wide-mouthed Bay of Bengal opens upon the Indian Ocean, lies, just within those capacious jaws, a small collection of island groups. As the eye runs across the map, from the south of Burma to the Malay Peninsula, these islands will be found lying between, like the remaining links of a chain which, at some remote time, bound

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

those lands together. The chief of these groups is known as the Andamans ; and next in importance come the Nicobars, farther to the south. At Port Blair, in the Andamans, is one of the finest harbours in the world, but unfortunately it is situated where the world has little need of it.

One thing alone brings these islands into anything like prominence. Known they have been for many centuries, as they were even to the old Greek geographers, but they have become interesting only since they were put to a most unhappy though necessary use. On the Andamans is now to be found a population of convicts, sent there by the Government of India, and numbering from ten to eleven thousand souls. The character of the more important inhabitants of the islands, therefore, is uninviting, and not many visitors are found on the fine vessels that call at Port Blair with

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

His Majesty's mail. The small staff of British officers, with about one hundred and fifty men of an English regiment, have things much to themselves, and are left severely uncriticized, even by the ubiquitous 'globe-trotter.' Apart from this small official circle, society is of an evil cast. Of the ten thousand prisoners who claim the attention of the staff, more than seven thousand are convicted murderers who have cheated the gallows, and the rest are criminals of the worst class. But the gibbet, although thus wronged, does not relinquish its hope of finally receiving its own ; for, according to the almost martial law prevailing in the settlement, the convict who attacks and injures another person, presumably in an attempt to murder, is doomed to suffer the extreme penalty of the law. The islands are desirably situated, and contain many spots of much beauty ; but

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

they are likely to be generally neglected while this shady body of settlers remains.

In 1789 a Lieutenant Blair, searching on behalf of the Indian authorities for a suitable convict settlement, concluded that these islands well fulfilled the required conditions. He was right. Experience has proved how well they answer their purpose, and how almost impossible is escape from their shores. For some reason the islands at first seemed so unhealthy that they were abandoned. But the later occupation shows them to be salubrious enough. After long desertion they were re-occupied in 1858 as one of the natural results of dealing with the offenders in the Indian Mutiny, and they have been occupied ever since. They now probably contain the finest collection of deep-dyed rascality on the face of the earth. It will be a satisfaction to some to know that the number of Christians among the convict population is very

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

small, and much below their proportionate general percentage of the population. This is a fact which does not at all agree with the emphatic statement which we sometimes hear as to the character of the native Christian, although it is what a reasonable man might expect.

One curious prisoner there, who was once seen by an old friend of the writer performing the most menial service as a sweeper, was aforetime Raja of Puri, the chief seat of the worship of Jagannath. That king is hereditary 'sweeper to the god.' He instigated a most atrocious murder, and finally was deported as a convict. Being technically a scavenger, it fell out that he was actually set to do such menial work while under punishment for his crime.

All the restrictions attaching to ordinary convict life are not needed here. The sea forms the prison wall, and much liberty is

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

allowed to certain of the captives. After a time the first stringency of bondage is slackened, and on condition of continued good behaviour the proportion of freedom is increased ; until at last those who show themselves worthy of the privilege may settle down to their own occupations, practically free men, except that the narrow coasts still bound their liberty. These convicts are known as 'self-supporters,' and those who are sentenced for life are, under certain circumstances, allowed to marry. Things matrimonial must be done in due form, with official cognizance, and with clear understanding of the serious nature of the engagement. Much trouble is taken, even extending to reference to the Indian district whence the convict comes, to secure satisfactory proof of the woman's legal freedom to marry ; and consent is not given if no proof is obtained. Everything is done

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

decently and in order, and thus new homes are set up even in the land of punishment.

Viper Island, or Point Viper, is a most beautiful spot, but it is emphatically such a place as that of which Bishop Heber wrote :

Where every prospect pleases,
And only man is vile.

Some versions bring this soft impeachment against Ceylon, and others accuse Java. If the reviser could see his way to working the name of this locality into the text without sacrificing the poetry no further change would be needed. Here the prospect certainly pleases, and here man is peculiarly and pre-eminently vile. The place is the abode of the very cream of rascality. To this spot are sent the worst and most incorrigible of offenders, and its people form an aristocracy of vice. Here punishment is severe and labour hard ; for when comparative mercy has failed, justice at last puts forth the iron hand.

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

A ship captain well known to the writer once took down with him on an Andamans trip a ferocious Pathan, who boasted that he had slain twenty-five people. How he had escaped the gallows we cannot tell. It was now his one ambition to kill a European, and the captain was the peculiar object of his choice ! He had no opportunity of doing so, and the officer is alive to-day. But at Point Viper this savage creature behaved in such a manner that he was at last secured in an iron cage.

It will be remembered that Lord Mayo, Viceroy of India, while paying a visit to the Andamans in 1872, was slain by the hand of an assassin at Hope Town, on Viper Island. A tragic termination was thus put to one of the most vigorous and useful viceroyalties that India has known.

Work of various kinds is done by the involuntary colonists. The Government wisely endeavours to get out of them as

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

much as possible towards the cost of the settlement. They are usefully employed in building operations, the chief trouble being to obtain a sufficient number of capable convicts for this class of labour. The work of forest clearing goes on under careful and skilled supervision, and steam sawmills are busily and profitably employed. The forests contain timber of considerable commercial value. 'Padouk,' for instance, an indigenous wood useful to cabinetmakers and others, is cut and exported in considerable quantities. More than three thousand tons have been sent to London in a single year. The wood is sold in England for about nine pounds per ton, so there is a good return for this form of convict industry. Tea gardens are also established, and vigorously worked. Burma, a near neighbour, provides a market for the produce, and the gardens give excellent results. They are worked

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

on a strictly commercial basis, and, on the whole, yield a good profit. Cocoa, coffee, rubber, and other useful products are diligently cultivated, while the cocoanut-tree is made to pay a handsome tribute to the revenue of the islands.

The education of the young is not neglected. Naturally, most of them are children of convict parents, and the training is of a sufficiently complete character, including technical and industrial departments. There are several native schools and one European, this last being under the special care of the chaplain. Since there is but a handful of non-native convicts, the white children must be those of official residents.

At one time European prisoners were occasionally sent to the Andamans, from Indian jails, on a sort of conditional liberty. They were employed in some useful capacity in the settlement, and found life

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

in the islands much to be preferred to that of an Indian prison. Some thirty years ago a ship's captain and a broker were concerned in a great insurance fraud at Bombay. A vessel was well laden, well insured, and then lost not a day's journey from that port. The sea itself became the accuser, and the supposed cotton bales, washed ashore and found to be stuffed with rubbish, proved all-sufficient evidence. They had not been rendered heavy enough to secure the safety of the swindlers. Both the culprits got heavy sentences, but at last were sent to service, as staff assistants, at the Andamans.

About fifty persons constitute the superior or European civil staff of the settlement. There is a small detachment of British infantry at Ross; and this force appears to sufficiently represent the power of the empire in the midst of this great convict population, so far as Englishmen

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

are concerned. It does not, however, stand alone, but is supported by about three hundred sepoy and a strong force of military police ; these last are practically soldiers, though under a more pacific name.

This, however, is not the full extent of the fighting power. The civilians are amateur warriors also, and at a recent annual inspection were some four-and-twenty strong. Such is the modern and inordinate growth of the military spirit, that even this force of two dozen men is considered insufficient, and the commander-in-chief endorses the inspecting officer's report with the word, 'Should obtain more members if possible.' Regulars and volunteers combined, it is doubtful whether any other nation than the British would dream of holding such a mass of desperate humanity in subjection by means of so small an alien force.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

The very common employment of convict servants about domestic duties is not all delight. Some time ago a bearer or house servant fell in love with an ayah, both being convicts. She utterly refused to have anything to do with him, and he determined on revenge. One day, as she was nursing her mistress's baby, the bearer came quietly up from behind with a knife in his hand, seized her by the hair, dragged her head back, and nearly severed it from the body. He had no quarrel with the infant, and it was left unharmed.

To some the remaining portion of this chapter will be of the greater interest. There is another population upon the islands, of a different character from that of which we have spoken. This is an aboriginal one, composed of at least two distinct races, who in many points are worthy of a more careful study than we can give.

These more ancient and more rightful

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

lords of the soil are curious barbarian peoples, almost if not quite unique, and are rapidly dying out. The old mariners spoke of them as 'dog-faced man-eaters,' and Hunter calls them the 'rudest fragments of mankind.' Of late years the Government has adopted measures to arrest the rapidity of the process of extinction, and by means of scientific investigation, careful photography, and anthropometric records, to obtain a full and accurate knowledge of these strange inhabitants. It is not possible to link these aborigines with certainty to any known race, but it is believed that the people of the Nicobars are of the Malay stock, and that those of the Andamans have affinity both with the inferior races of South India and with some of the African tribes. The Nicobarese are devil worshippers. They live in huts built high and dry on piles, near the sea-shore ; and when a man dies he is furnished

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

with a stock of useful provisions to sustain him on his journeyings in the world to come. Here, among these savages, is a gleam of an intelligence which says, at least, that death is not the end.

The British are more busy with the Andamanese. Of these, one tribe has so far proved almost inaccessible and quite intractable. Fierce, revengeful, and suspicious are these Jarawas ; and nothing that can be done seems to give them the least confidence in our desire for friendly relations. Occasionally small parties are seen in the jungles. They immediately let fly their arrows, and then take to flight, disappearing so rapidly in the mangrove swamps that pursuit is usually vain. In a few cases captures have been made, and kind treatment has been pursued, with a view of using the tamed specimens as ambassadors ; but it has been entirely without effect, and these Jarawas are more

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

entirely wild men of the woods than any others on earth. Other tribes are more tractable, and much is being done for them. Photographs of these people are interesting, and they are to be found abundantly in various scientific collections ; but it would hardly be desirable to faithfully reproduce them here. The Andamanese are an ill-favoured race, black of complexion, woolly headed, and a man of average height stands *four feet three*. Missionary efforts were made among these people for many years, from 1711 until 1845. Both Moravians and Jesuits have laboured among them, but without apparent result. Effort of this kind does not enter into the present programme of work on the islands.

The late Mr. Portman, an officer of the British Government, found his occupation in the care of these races. Occasionally small parties have been taken to Calcutta, where they were deeply impressed by the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

wonders of modern civilization. Three bicycles formed part of the spoil taken back by some of the youths on one of these occasions. The young fellows learned to ride them with skill, and they were kept, to the astonishment of the unenlightened, on the premises of an institution which was under Mr. Portman's care. This place is a sort of home and hospital, in connexion with which much aid is given to the suffering, and good scientific work is carried on. A magnificent collection of platinotypes is now in the British Museum as one of the results of this work, and doubtless the collection will be accessible to those who desire to see what sort of people these are, and to get an idea of their occupations, their diversions, and their dwelling-places. These photographs are taken in a most systematic manner, and are of the highest value.

Fishery is one of the chief employments

A MODERN BOTANY BAY

of the people ; but there is another of more curious interest. This is the collection of edible birds' nests—those of the swift—and a very profitable business it is. At the proper season these nests are carefully collected from the caves in which the birds congregate. They are considered a great delicacy in the East, and sell at a good price. The collection varies considerably from year to year, but it brought in during a recent season a profit of three thousand rupees. The nests find a ready market in Burma and farther East. The caves are closely preserved, almost like a rich man's covers at home, and the convicts occasionally do a little poaching. The nests are very light, and it takes a good number to make any considerable weight ; but they sell first-hand at about fifteen shillings a pound, and thence downwards, according to cleanness and quality.

The entire disappearance of these savage

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

tribes from all the islands is only a matter of time ; but the British Government does what it can, by paternal care and kindness, and the institution of such law and order as seem to suit the peculiar case, to delay as long as possible their extinction.

XI

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

The Census of India—From China to Arabia—An army of voluntary workers—The humours of census-taking, and its dangers—Drastic sanitary measures—A matter for careful arrangement—Smart work in a native State—What is the use of it all?

THE greatest undertaking in the world, in the way of numbering a people, is the Decennial Census of India. Down to the smallest detail, it is a triumph of organization; and except for a few isolated instances, in which circumstances make it impossible, the whole of the essential operation is carried out in a single night. In five hours nearly three hundred millions of people are carefully enumerated, and many particulars concerning each of them

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

duly scheduled, while the area of operations stretches across a large part of the habitable globe. On that night the record is being made from the borders of China, in the far east, to the confines of Persia and Arabia in the west ; from the snowy passes of the Himalayas to tropic islands of the Indian seas. Of many parts of the world we have rough estimates of enormous populations, as we have of that of China ; but, in regard to India, we have calculations as well based as those to which we are accustomed at home, and when we speak of some three hundred millions, we know that we now have them all.

We naturally expect to have to employ a great army of workers in order to reap such a harvest of information in so brief a space of time. Thus, beside the small group of superior officials, there were nearly a million and a half of people engaged in the taking of the last Indian

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

Census, of whom 1,325,478 were enumerators. The work is approached as an Army Council might approach a campaign, the preparation for which allowed of full and careful deliberation ; and by far the greater part of the colossal amount of work involved is done for nothing, and done cheerfully, by this mighty host of assistants. These persons are said to bring to their task 'a spirit of painstaking and occasionally grotesque accuracy which is unequalled anywhere in the world.' All sorts and conditions of men, in all parts of the Empire, thus join to make possible what would otherwise be a hopeless endeavour.

As to conscientious accuracy, certain native officials were most anxious to know from head quarters, on the last occasion, what *was* to be done towards filling up the sixteen columns of the schedule in the case of a deaf and dumb lunatic who was found wandering by himself on the night

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

on which the census was being taken ! In another case, difficulty was caused to zealous enumerators by the presence of an assembly of religious ascetics or *fakirs*, who were all under extremely awkward vows of silence, and on whose account special arrangements had finally to be made.

The work of the enumerator, in several localities, was not by any means unattended by danger. There had never been so thorough a census of our Empire before. Outlying places like the Shan States and the Andaman Islands were enumerated for the first time, though such localities were necessary exceptions to the rule of synchronism. But in the Andamans some of the wild and warlike aboriginal tribes fiercely attacked the apostles of statistical science, and unfortunately one of the assailants was killed ; while the parties of workers travelled

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

at much risk in waters that were little known and very imperfectly charted. In the course of these journeys to remote spots a new tribe was discovered. It was found that it was a very small one, and that it had recently suffered serious diminution, the reason being that, on the breaking out of an alarmingly contagious disease, the healthy members of the tribe had thought it a wise precaution to kill off all those who were attacked, and had proceeded to do so. This stringent application of sanitary methods had proved extremely effectual, but the prejudices of civilization will, no doubt, stand in the way of its general adoption. Some few localities have not yet, though within our own borders, been visited by the census-taker. He has not yet entered the villages of the Wa head-hunters of Burma, nor has he gone to a few other spots where his objects would be wholly mis-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

understood and where only mischief would be wrought.

Not all the dangers that were faced were due to savage tribes or trackless waters. The teachers and students of a great school at Bombay, in the midst of the frightful visitation of the plague, offered to conduct all the necessary census operations in one quarter of the city. It will be readily understood how dangerous domiciliary visits might be in such a place, and it proved that some of the enumerators fell victims to the dread disease, having contracted it, presumably, in the course of their work.

For the first time the strange and wild country of Baluchistan was included in the census operations of 1901. This is a land of which a native proverb says, concerning some of its divisions, ' O God, when Thou hadst created Sibi and Dadhar, what object was there in conceiving hell ? '

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

In the case of such a country and its peoples the full and vivid report of the census officials becomes one of the most valuable and accurate sources of information, on a great variety of subjects, that it is possible to obtain. Such facts as it presents are, many of them, obtained with the utmost difficulty and at a great deal of personal risk and endurance.

Many minor matters have to be considered when an Indian Census is being planned. The night must not be the 'dark o' the moon,' for very obvious reasons, and it is necessary to keep off the anniversaries of the greater religious festivals and fairs or *melas*. To avoid everything of the sort is not an easy task, by any means, with such an area to consider and when dealing with peoples of so many varied faiths. Then there are auspicious dates, the nights of which call for much bathing in sacred streams or

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

which lead to widespread absence from home at marriage ceremonies. All this must be carefully considered before the date is fixed for the actual enumeration. On the last occasion much time was spent in January and February in preparing papers for every house and every person concerned, names being inserted, with other particulars, in readiness for the great day ; then, between 7 p.m. and midnight on March 1st, every dwelling was visited, and the papers checked and brought up to date by striking off the absent and the dead, and adding the name of every new arrival. The quickest piece of work in the way of sending in returns was done by the Minister of the little State of Rampur. His census staff worked all night, while his cavalry soldiers rode round collecting summaries, and his rough totals were despatched to the Government of India at 9.20 on the morning of the

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

2nd of March, five days ahead of any return from a British province! So much for native indolence, apathy, and inefficiency.

The whole of the Empire was divided into small blocks, generally containing from thirty to fifty houses; and this block unit was the area for which the individual enumerator was responsible. To do the work carefully and exactly, for all the persons within the block, would fairly well occupy his time during the few hours given to the actual work of counting the people. Some ten to fifteen blocks would be grouped into a circle under a supervisor, and other and more important officials would deal with groups of circles, and so on until at last one Civil servant would be responsible for the whole field of operations. In one remote locality, in Lushailand, the foundation had to be well and truly laid by teaching a number of the enumerators how to read and write!

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

But all this is only the beginning of census work. When the three hundred millions have duly answered the questions of the inquisitorial Government, and have supplied information as to age, sex, education, occupation, language, religion, marriage, infirmities, &c., there comes the mighty business of tabulation, or, so to speak, digestion of the mass. Within a fortnight the main figures were available in the case of the last census, and the variation from the final figures was but infinitesimal. But a great clerical staff, together with the arithmometer, or calculating machine, and a most ingenious system of abstraction, still required more than a year to complete the work. The greatest difficulty and delay was caused by the voluminous and complicated information regarding 'caste' and 'occupations,' and in spite of all the unpaid labour the cost of the whole undertaking was about £150,000.

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

In order to facilitate the abstraction of the particulars given on the schedules an ingenious system was adopted, which had been invented by Herr Von Mayr, and successfully used in Bavaria. A slip was provided for each person enumerated, and to this the information was transferred from the original schedule. To make the work as simple as possible, ingenious devices were used, such as the following:— Different colours were adopted for the different religions concerned, so that, if the particular business were that of compiling the tables on religion, red slips would be thrown into one box, blue into another, and green into a third, with great rapidity, and without any reading at all. After this simple sorting process, counting would do the rest. Then the shape of the slip would give another item of information with equal facility, and a variety of sizes would afford another similar ad-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

vantage. Thus the colour, size, and shape of a card would give three main items of information without a word being written on the subject. It will be seen that the mere provision of slips was a very costly business, and the choice of colours was affected by the varying prices of papers of different hues. With over two hundred millions of Hindus to deal with, the cheapest article that would suit the work would assuredly be provided for them, and the Mohammedans would have that which came next in cheapness.

In the Mysore, the ingenious census superintendent printed pictures on the slips, representing men and women in various conditions and stations of life for whom they were to be used. For instance, a widower was represented by a typical picture of an elderly Hindu with moustaches, and with the head bare, in sign of mourning, and the caste mark absent, an omission of

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

the same significance ; while a married woman was represented by a face of mature age, with caste mark, and with such ornaments on the nose, ears, and neck as would usually be given to a bride, and also with the medallion called the *Tali*, which shows that the husband is living. This picturesque addition to the official programme seems to have been smiled upon by the authorities, and the whole system, then newly adopted in India, worked remarkably well. In one province, for example, work was done in seven months which took just three times as long under the old and cumbersome system in vogue in 1891.

And what is the good of it all ? Does it really matter precisely how many people dwell within our borders, and how many of them are over thirty-five, and how many are lame, and how many can read and write ? Perhaps not, but the census does

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

far more than to determine such points as these.

It brings to light an extraordinary mass of facts relating to religion, ethnography, philology, and history. It raises questions which call forth much patient and skilful study, all of which is well repaid when the answer is found. In one part of the country the census work has given us most valuable information as to the nature and the progress of the Arya Samaj, a curious 'quasi-vedic revival,' and a bitter antagonist of Christianity. The report for the Central Provinces is largely a vivid and picturesque history of the famine which devastated the land a few years ago, and a record of the fight which was made against it, while the Madras report is of peculiar value to the student of religion and the friend of Christian missions, and also contains a valuable study of the caste system of the south. That for

THE NUMBERING OF A PEOPLE

Burma is a handbook of the 'animism, veneered with Buddhism, that makes up the religion of the Burman,' while another deals very fully and fairly with the rise and spread of Christianity in Cochin, and yet others are admirable and full histories of the growth of the great centres of population, such as Calcutta and Bombay. In the necessity of the case, the full reports form a series of somewhat forbidding blue-books, overladen with statistics, so that the interesting facts which would be of general interest are not readily accessible; but an extremely interesting volume, and more than one, might easily be compiled from the mass. It would be difficult to conceive of anything which could give a better and fairer account of 'things as they are' in the India of to-day.

XII

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

The young missionary—Early responsibilities—A promising inquirer—A satisfactory examination—The university certificates—A startling turn—The real Simon Pure—The laying of the trap—How the victim walked into it—A dramatic moment ; and a bitter disappointment for more persons than one.

THE Junior was certainly very junior indeed, for he had but just left his native shores, and had hardly lost the pleasant pinky - whiteness of his skin. Everything under the sunny skies of India was full of interest, and his heart was full of hope. How it was that within a few months of his arrival he came to be left in sole charge of a not unimportant station



A STUDENT INQUIRER WHO TURNED OUT WELL.

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

it is not easy to say. But so it was, and this is a kind of thing which is continually happening, in all occupations, in that peculiar country. Generally speaking, young shoulders, upon which at home none would think of imposing such heavy responsibilities, seem to bear them well. The Junior was the possessor of a large stock of inexperience, a healthy youthful enthusiasm, and perhaps an average amount of common sense.

It was with a good deal of pleasure that the young man found himself face to face, one afternoon, with a most intelligent and apparently well-to-do young Indian, of about two-and-twenty years of age, who was expressing the strongest desire to attach himself to the Christian Church. He had already, said he, given a good deal of time to the study of religion, and was entirely convinced that it was his duty to seek baptism, at whatever cost.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

The Junior was very deeply impressed. This was the kind of thing for which he had been hoping. It was the first case which had been presented to him, and it appeared to be worthy of all possible attention, and one, perhaps, likely to make a stir in the neighbourhood. However, it would not do to jump too readily at anybody, so he began, with all the weightiness of manner he could summon to his aid, to ask a few questions. Why did the candidate come to the minister of an English congregation ? There was a most excellent native minister not far away ; why had he not gone to him and joined himself to his own people ? Well, there was a good reason for that. At the native church all the proceedings were in the vernacular, whereas he had a thorough knowledge of English, and would much prefer to make the fullest use of it. That seemed reasonable enough. Then the Junior put him

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

through a simple examination as to the leading truths of Christianity, with a very satisfactory result, and the young man went so far as to declare his personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Saviour. When he was asked how he had come to these conclusions, he said that he had been connected with the Brahmo Samaj movement, but that its teachings had failed to satisfy the needs of his mind and heart, and he had read and thought about the matter until he had come to his present decision.

All this was very encouraging and very promising. The Junior has since met with a good many inquirers who have turned out better than this one, but he has never yet met with one who promised better. He desired to know a little more about his visitor, and learned that his name was Bose, or something very like it, and that he had already done very well in the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

various university examinations, up to the B.A. In proof of this he produced certificates up to the intermediate examination, and said that he had just passed the final, but had not yet received his certificate. He had been a student in a Scottish Mission College, under a principal for whom the Junior had already a profound respect. It would never do to show any inclination to precipitancy, and so a promise was made that the case should be inquired into and well thought over, and an appointment was made for a few days later. Thus ended a mutually satisfactory interview. The careful young man then wrote to the principal concerned, expecting that he would be glad, indeed, to hear of a case so encouraging in connexion with his college work. But he was not a little surprised to learn that while it was true that a young man of the name given had passed through the college at the time

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

indicated, he was already a Christian, and the principal was quite unable to understand what these things might mean.

Then a curious coincidence happened. Another young man, just commencing medical practice, called on the Junior a day or two later, bearing a letter from the college principal, testifying that this was the original and only genuine Bose, and that the other must therefore be an impostor. Strangely enough, this young man, who had not called on the principal since leaving the college, had decided that very week that it was time to do so, and to his great astonishment was at once brought to book for his behaviour as to seeking baptism. He was naturally indignant, and full of protestation, but soon began to see light on the subject, and obtained the introduction to the Junior. After putting that perplexed young missionary through a long catechism, ending

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

with particular inquiries as to the certificates, he concluded by declaring that they were his property, stolen from him two years before.

Matters now became interesting. It appeared that the young doctor had suffered the utmost inconvenience from the loss of the papers, and was very keen on catching the thief. He said that they had been borrowed for a few hours or days in order to settle some small dispute, and had then been declared to be lost, to the unspeakable sorrow of the borrower. They had fallen into bad hands, and dishonest use had been made of them on more than one occasion. But it had not been suspected that the borrower was a false friend, who had never lost them at all, but had himself posed as an undergraduate, and obtained employment on the strength of them. The Junior promised to do what he could, and prepared for the part

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

of an amateur detective. The neophyte was due at his house on a certain Saturday evening, but it was not likely that he would have the evidences of his guilt upon him, so he must be put off for a while. He arrived late, to the delight of the avenger, who on that ground proposed another appointment. This was soon agreed upon, and he remarked, in a casual manner, that as it was desirable that matters should then be finally arranged, it would be just as well if the applicant could bring some testimonials as to character, &c. 'Let me see,' said the Junior, 'you showed me some university certificates, I think?' 'Yes.' 'You had better bring them with you, and anything else in the nature of testimonials, and we will get something settled.' And, consenting, the candidate went his way.

The amateur detective soon found his way to the house of the doctor, and the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

next Tuesday morning found the doctor and a deeply interested friend at the mission house. The Junior had a study in which, as he sat, he faced a pair of closed folding doors, and behind those doors he concealed the two friends. Then he sat down at his books and waited. Just at the tick of the clock the candidate calmly and unsuspectingly entered the house. He was evidently well pleased with himself, and with all the world, and was dressed in rather fine style, as befitting a great occasion. The Junior could not quite manage shaking hands with him, but, seating himself between the visitor and the door, gave him once more the chance of speaking the truth if he would. But that he had no intention of doing, and he solemnly asserted that he had no unworthy or selfish motive in seeking admission to the Church. He spoke in such a manner that it was hard, indeed, for the young

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

missionary to believe that such a man could be the utter fraud he was.

After a little more talk the Junior said, as carelessly as he could : ‘ I suppose you have brought some testimonials ? ’ There was some hesitation, of which he took advantage to add : ‘ Anyway, you will have your certificates ; let me see them. ’ Very readily they were produced and handed over. The youth was directly asked whether they were his, to which he rather wonderingly replied in the affirmative. On this the Junior rose, threw open the folding doors, and, as he turned back, locked the door of exit and put the key in his pocket. As the doors opened the youth looked quickly in that direction ; stared at the two men framed in the doorway as though he could not believe his eyes, and then suddenly dropped his head, and silently and steadfastly gazed upon the floor. It was all out, and he knew it.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

The real owner promptly claimed the papers, but for a long time nothing would induce the culprit so much as to look up. There was some talk of prosecution, but it was known that the young man had lost very seriously over one situation he had obtained by the aid of the practice of his fraud ; and as he was in a state of the most abject humiliation, after some faithful admonitions on the part of the friends and some very fervent promises on his own, he was permitted to depart, and he slunk away like a well-thrashed cur.

So ended his attempt to get baptized. No doubt the idea was that his interesting baptism would open the way for him into fresh fields of enterprise, though it is not much that a mission has to offer in the way of lucrative employment.

And so ended the bright hopes of the Junior, in that particular case. He did not make it the basis of any sweeping

HIS FIRST INQUIRER

judgements, and he would have been wrong had he done so. He lived long enough in India to see more cases than one that were anything but satisfactory, but to see enough of a very different kind to fill the heart with thankful and happy memories, and to fix within his soul an unquenchable hope ; enough, spite of every disappointment, to enable him to set his own name against that ancient word : ‘ I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.’

XIII

OFF TO THE WEDDING

In the days of youth—Away from the city—The slow train—The 'Missionary Box'—Antique chariots—The river crossing—Missionary hospitality—Turned out for the night—The great occasion—A glove apiece—A lack of church accommodation—The agitated bridegroom—On the road again—A place of songs.

IT was all in days of happy memory, of comparatively light responsibility and, as it seems now, of almost pure delight. We were all young then, but now we are getting old, and grey hairs are here and there upon us. And modern progress in general, and the new railway in particular, have swept most of the old conditions out of the way. We have got



A VERY SUPERIOR 'TURNOUT.'

OFF TO THE WEDDING

the advantages we then desired, and now we wish that in some things we could be again as in the days past. But it is in vain, and the present is the better after all. We well know that time and distance often invest the past with a fictitious and sentimental charm. Still, it is not all a matter of sentiment. Those were hours of the morning and days of the spring-time, and the mind sometimes goes back with a longing regret to the years that can come no more.

But we must haste to the wedding, and we will call the 'historic present' to our aid.

There are four of us in the present party, and not one of the four has any reasonable apprehension of being married on this particular occasion, so that our minds are free from carking care. The first business is to get our fourteen packages on to the top of a couple of somewhat

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

rickety conveyances ; bestow ourselves inside ; and after powerful exhortations and directions to the drivers, to tear off through the busy streets of the great city, over the most wonderful floating bridge in the world, to the entrance to the collection of substantial sheds which forms a great Indian railway terminus.

In order to prolong the pleasure of our experiences as much as possible we have chosen a slow train, and shall take some six and a half hours to do a hundred and twenty miles. For the new arrival in the country this is really a most admirable arrangement, giving unique opportunities of studying the scenery and the people, but it is apt to be a little tedious to the well-seasoned soul. When we get to a halfway station we find a large refreshment room, and the train lingers for half an hour or so, to cool the bearings of the wheels and to give our appetites a chance.

OFF TO THE WEDDING

At the tables we have an opportunity of seeing how little one can get for a fairly large expenditure, if one only goes to the right place. But the pleasantest of journeys must come to an end at last, and some time in the early evening we reach the close of the longest and the easiest stage of our travels. The finding of the fourteen packages which we feel honourably bound to demand causes not a little confusion to the railway people, but all is soon set straight, and we climb the bank on our way to the mission house. This is a building so absurdly small that we think with some concern of how we are to pack ourselves away for the night, but it is done, and some ungrateful wretch repays the kindness of our host by henceforth dubbing his modest mansion the 'Missionary Box.'

It is not until the next afternoon that, having been joined by another small contingent of pilgrims, we make a start for

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

our destination. Three hours late — a trifle to those with whom we have to do — a striking procession comes into view. It consists of three chariots, which appear to have been borrowed from some museum of antiquities, at no small risk of their irreparable ruin ; and each of them is drawn by a pair of diminutive ponies, apparently quite unequal to the task. If, under such circumstances, some one animal should happen to appear to be exceptionally fat and well liking—look out ! There will be some hidden reason for his inclusion in the sorry team, and the reason will probably leak out before the end of the stage—perhaps before we are able to get a start. It would be too much to hope that we ever shall see smaller, older, dirtier, or more dilapidated carriages than these, but one or two prematurely aged travellers assure us that they have seen them. On another page we have said something

OFF TO THE WEDDING

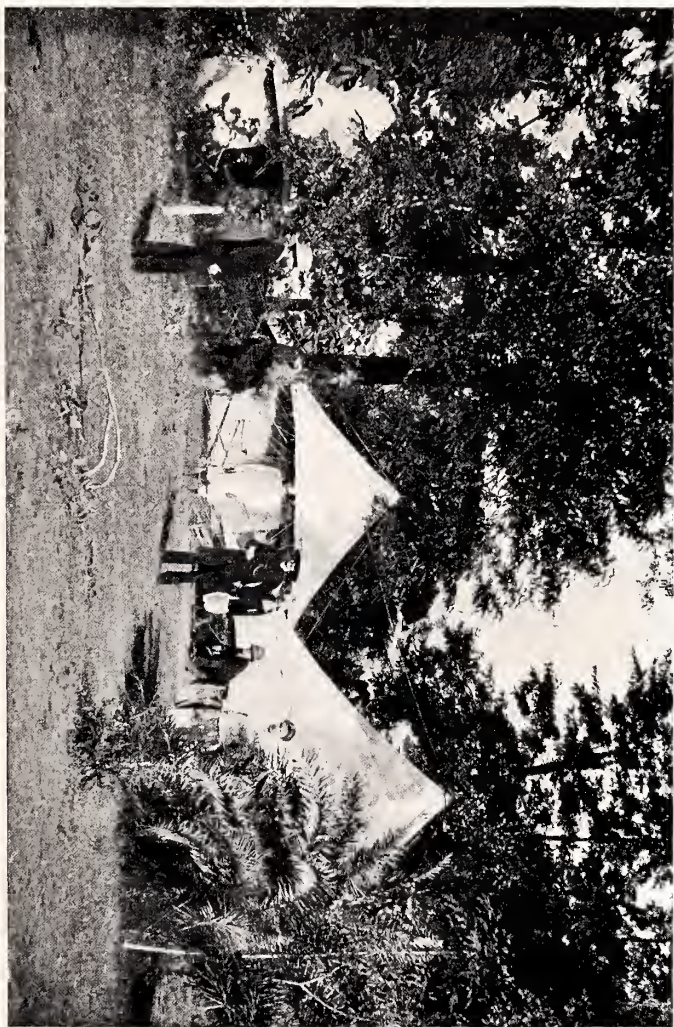
about the tribulations of travel in Bengal, and it is not necessary here to fully tell the story of our sorrows. We lumber slowly along the interminable road ; we fight with beasts whenever we change our ponies for another pair ; and we drag across the wide river bed at the rate of nearly a mile an hour. That is, when the oxen are moving, but they seem to require a good deal of restful meditation. In the dry sand between the shallow streams we find a human skull, which no doubt has belonged to some Santal whose dead body has been cast into the sacred waters. One never knows when it may be well to have a spare skull in reserve, and a lady in our party shows a great desire for the ghastly, grinning relic of humanity. It is only fair to say that she is engaged in medical work, and so may find it of some use. Our native friends do not at all like this addition to the party, and murmur loudly of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

ghosts and what they are likely to do. Over the stream, then another start, in pitchy darkness ; then the bright and cheerful moon ; then a narrow escape from fell disaster ; then another river to cross ; and at last we say good-bye to a road which has a first-class reputation as a cure for a sluggish liver, and roll into the mission compound at our journey's end. We are welcomed with hearty hand-grips and cheery words ; and presently in the brightly lighted room, at the well-spread board, with familiar faces around, we are all very happily at home.

But at last three of us are turned out into the cruel night. Misbehaviour ? No, not at all. This house, too, is small, and we have overflowed, that is all. We find our way to a roomy tent, and there succeed in making ourselves extremely comfortable until an hour in the morning which it may be as well to leave unnamed. When we do

EXTRA ACCOMMODATION AT A COUNTRY HOUSE.



OFF TO THE WEDDING

rise we find the wedding preparations well advanced, and the photographer already busily at work.

In due time a curious selection of carriages, such as most of us have never seen at a wedding before, begins to arrive. Presently the chief Government official in the station, the magistrate of the district, and a good friend, makes his appearance. He is to give the bride away, and he and the groomsmen soon discover that they have no white gloves. The nearest shop at which such things can be got is a hundred and fifty miles away, but somebody offers to lend a pair, and these two important persons march off, each carrying one glove, and cherishing a faint hope that nobody will notice that it is not two. The two bridesmaids are charmingly dressed in pink, but the accompanying swains are festively arrayed in black, being parsons, and naturally putting on their best clothes.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Off we go, out of the roomy compound, the scene of much missionary activity, and down the dusty road ; over the little stream, and away up a pleasant and shady avenue, near by the indigo factory, not to the church, for there is none, but to a Government building in which a room is fitted up for church purposes, and there the fateful words are spoken and the two lives are joined.

A town without a church and without a draper's shop, or a baker's or a confectioner's, is perhaps not an ideal place for a wedding ; but all is managed wonderfully well, thanks partly, perhaps, to some of our fourteen packages. There is no hitch of any kind, unless it is true, as some allege, that the bridegroom falls into some pardonable confusion on attempting to speak, and manages to very cordially propose his own health ! Whether it is so we cannot say. We are all photographed, one of our planter friends

OFF TO THE WEDDING

with a huge water-lily in his buttonhole ;
the newly-wed drive away, and it is all
over.

The next evening a happy company
starts for the distant city. There is but
one breakdown, and that happens in the
middle of the night. It is but a light
affliction, and only means a well enlivened
tramp for perhaps a very few miles. Once
more we are in mid-river, balancing our-
selves on the roof of a lumbering country
cart, at three o'clock in the morning,
when suddenly, from the box below, comes
the shrill piping of the voice of a three-
year-old girl, a missionary's child, and
there floats out into the still Indian night
the familiar strain—

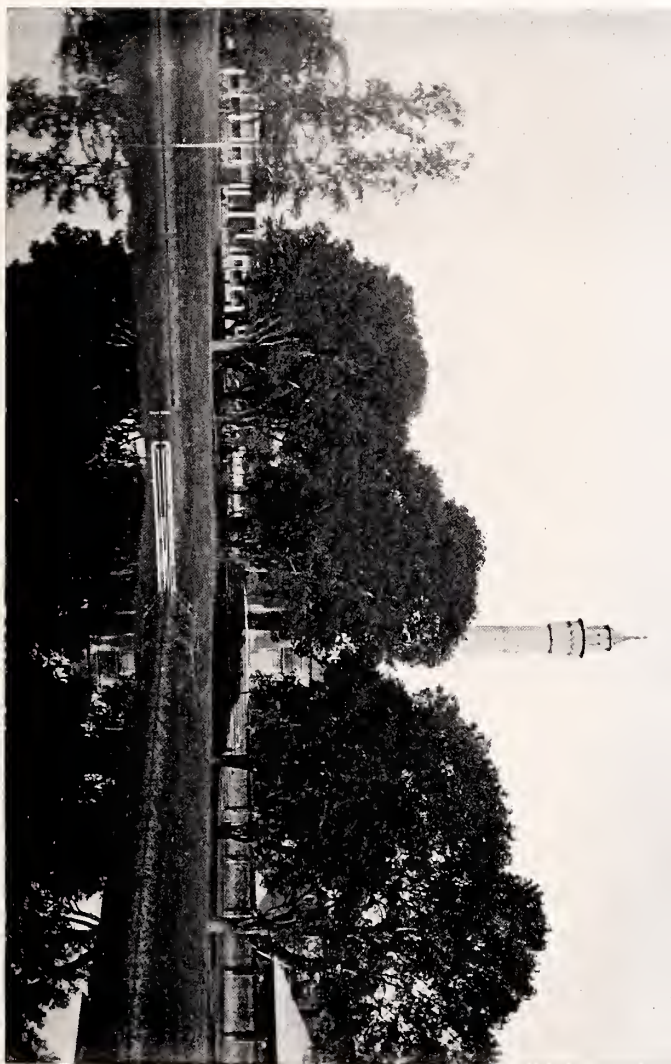
O! that will be joyful,
Joyful, joyful, joyful ;
O! that will be joyful,
When we meet to part no more.

XIV

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA, AND HIS ATTITUDE TOWARDS CHRISTIAN EFFORT

Census returns—The Civil Service—The mercantile and industrial community—Hindrances to Christianity—The prevailing attitude—A tolerant indifference — A general ignorance — Occasional opposition—How the native interprets our faults —Interest in missions and active aid—Unofficial missionaries—Godly soldiers—The providence of Christian governors.

THE latest census of India gives 169,677 as the number of Europeans in India. This figure certainly includes a large number of people who are not of purely European origin, though these are supposed to be separately returned. We should be disposed to place the actual number of persons of European birth, with



DUM DUM, LORD ROBERTS' FIRST INDIAN STATION.

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

their children, at not much over 120,000. A few of these come from the Continent of Europe, but almost the whole are our own kith and kin. Of the total, from 70,000 to 75,000 consist of the troops which form the British garrison. We shall not, by any means, exclude these from our consideration, but we are more concerned with the remaining part of the community. The whole number is small indeed compared with the three hundred millions which form the population of the continent; but, as will be readily understood, the importance of the foreigner is out of all proportion to his numerical strength.

We place first among the sections of society to be considered the officials, to whom is entrusted the responsible work of government. This not very numerous class is, of course, a peculiarly influential one, and upon the feeling and the attitude of its members a great deal depends.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

There are so many ways in which a Civil servant who is in sympathy with missionary aims can render the most valuable assistance, and so many in which he who looks upon them with disfavour can nullify the efforts and hamper the work of the evangelist. The indifferent man, who desires to avoid all trouble on either hand, finds a convenient refuge in his own interpretation of the famous Proclamation of 1858 regarding religious neutrality. But there are some who push their reading of that document to the length of an actual opposition to the propagation of the Christian faith.

Then we have a considerable number of Europeans engaged in the industrial enterprises of the country. The native of India, though he may have the means for such undertakings, very largely lacks the initiative, the energy, and the robust self-reliance necessary for the conduct of these affairs on a large scale. Consequently,

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

English capital is largely employed in the great commercial concerns, and European managers and assistants are at the head of almost every important undertaking. Thus we have settlements of our own people at all the mining and manufacturing centres, and at important points on all the lines of rail. In remote stations in the *mofussil*, as we call the country districts, we have little groups of men engaged in tea planting, or in the growing of indigo, or of jute, the great industry of Eastern Bengal. Near some of the great cities we have very large and well equipped cotton and jute mills, in which the familiar dialects of Oldham, or of Glasgow and Dundee are to be largely heard, together with a unique form of the vernacular, strangely modified by its passage through the Western mind and its contact with the Western tongue. The score or so of Europeans connected with such a place will be in

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the closest daily contact with a large number of natives of an intelligent and fairly self-reliant type, well worth the very best influence that can be brought to bear upon them.

In the Presidency cities we have the head quarters of the great mercantile concerns, and a comparatively large European community. The Englishman who dwells in such a centre hardly feels himself to be in a land of exile, or if he does he cannot but confess to a very great mitigation of its hardships. The large agencies and the banks attract a particularly good class of men, able to help us very considerably if they will. And there has of late been a great increase in the number of those who have gone out to a somewhat less desirable sphere of business life as assistants in the large retail houses which have now become a feature in European quarters. They are young men much of the type familiar to us

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

in shops at home, with just that additional touch of character which leads to their faring forth, with no very glittering prospects, to a distant land. For all those who are thus gathered in the great centres there is every religious opportunity. But there is not much for those outside, and it is hardly to be wondered at that many of them pay little attention to religion themselves, and do little to recommend it to others. There is another not wholly unimportant class, but it is not our purpose to speak here of the missionary forces of the continent, and of how insufficient they are, in face of such a task as that by which they are confronted.

When we consider the number of our fellow countrymen in India, and their widespread and peculiar distribution, we have at least some food for thought. If the attitude, even of the majority of them, to say nothing of the whole, were what we

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

should desire it to be, what a force of powerful auxiliaries the missionaries would have beside them ! We all feel that the ardent believer in Christ, whatever his occupation may be, *must* be a missionary. We may well pray, with all the earnestness we can command, for the conversion of our own folk in heathen lands. That would be one of the most effective means for securing all the human help we need in our great work. Though the consideration is a sadly familiar one, we cannot but refer to the serious hindrances to that work which are caused by the unworthy lives of some of those who come from a Christian land and bear the Christian name. No man can live in India for a few years without coming to have a sad and humiliating knowledge of the condition of things sometimes, and only sometimes, existing in remote places, amongst our own people : a knowledge which is quite enough to account for any

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

failure of our faith to commend itself to the ordinary native mind. We do believe that things are improving, but there are sad tragedies of European life in some of those outposts of enterprise of which we have lately spoken, and it is not hard to judge of what kind they are. And those friends at home who are most concerned, often know least about them. But our business is not with the character of our exiled countrymen, of whom we must not judge ill because of a few sorry specimens, but to inquire as to the prevailing attitude of the European in India towards missionary work.

The general feeling is, perhaps, largely one of indifference, yet an indifference tinged with a somewhat adverse opinion. It does not amount to anything like a strong antipathy, but it calmly assumes the needless and even quixotic nature of the enterprise. It is not at all on unfriendly terms with the good people who are doing

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the work, but it feels that they might have been employing their time and toil to much greater advantage. Their attempt is looked upon as a sad waste of money and of time by amiable and honest, but deluded, enthusiasts. Many of those who feel thus towards the work are possessed by a phenomenal ignorance as to its real conditions and prospects. The work of the missionary is quite out of their sphere. They have heard many things, but observed few ; and they have merely fallen in with current feeling on the matter. Many dwell among the heathen and never catch the real meaning of what they think and say and do. They dwell in a city of many shrines, but never understand their mute and pathetic testimony. They never dream of the real religiousness which lies at the bottom of men's hearts. This, at least, may be said about mere ignorance and indifference : it is not malicious, and it may be possible to inform

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

and to arouse the mind, and so to remove the absurdly erroneous notions that now so largely rule. It not seldom happens that those whose knowledge is so far to seek pose as great authorities in the saloon of the steamer, and as still greater ones when they attempt to enlighten friends at home. But the light in them is darkness, and they know as much about our business of missions as we know about theirs of forest management, or gold mining, or the trade in hides or bones ! Such folk sometimes do us mischief ; but they mean no ill.

But there are also those who take a definite stand against the missionary. They consider that he is not merely doing no good, but that he is doing harm. He unsettles the minds of the people ; he helps to encourage aspirations that make men discontented with the ancient way and with the present lot. There are those who find no pleasure in hearing of the conversion of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the despised Indian, and who will have nothing to do with a native Christian. To such a man, the very claim of his dusky neighbours to be of the same religion as himself implies a slight to him. Theirs is good enough for them—anything is. The claim to be co-religionists is assuming too much,—it suggests an unpleasant equality. There are men who are moved to anything but sympathy when told that some dark-skinned suppliant is a Christian.

And there are others who are ever ready to draw sweeping conclusions of an adverse character from premisses of a very slender kind. One unfortunate experience with a servant who called himself a Christian is enough to condemn the class. Your critic tells you then that he knows them, through and through ; he has tried them, and that nothing would ever persuade him that they are any good. He speaks as though he were a man of large experience, and con-

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

veniently forgets some very obvious and important considerations. He sets up a standard for the Indian Christian which is very much higher than that reached by the masses of the people in a Christian land. This critic is a very real person in India, and we hear a good deal of him. His feeling of antipathy leads him to acts of opposition, and he may even go out of his way to prejudice many who were previously of an open mind. If he is an official, he may influence the leading people of a native town against some such struggling enterprise as the Mission High School, or he will at least make it very clearly understood that he has no sort of sympathy with the misguided persons who are trying to subvert its customs and change its religion. If he is at the head of a merchant's office, or in charge of some large mill, which would afford a most excellent means of leading some of our people to self-support and

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

prosperity, he may let it be known that he has no sort of confidence in native Christians, and will do nothing to aid them.

As to the quiet influence of the European on the native mind, a few words may be sufficient. Of the great majority of Europeans it is difficult to say anything on this point. The probability is that the average life makes very little impression for or against the faith : the native does not conceive as we do of the very close nexus between faith and conduct. But the Englishman of openly evil life, of sharp practice, of cruel and oppressive disposition, certainly does most serious harm to the cause of the gospel. There is an increasing body of keen and critical native opinion, reflecting itself in an influential vernacular press, which at once seizes on cases of depravity and cruelty, and draws the conclusions that may be expected. Men who resent the domination of the foreigner

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

will naturally take advantage of such things, to the great damage of our interests among the people. But though thus affected by evil, perhaps the native mind is even more powerfully impressed by the example of a truly Christlike life. We have never lacked such examples, and we never shall. The Englishman in the midst of a subject race is always a little in danger of arrogance and pride, and of some other evils too. But if he is manifestly of brotherly and humble mind, of gentle behaviour, and of pure and upright life, the shrewd observer, who thinks a good deal that he never says, will probably put much of the credit to the right account, and he will at least feel the attraction of the Christlike life.

Wherever the Church is able to reach and to care for our own people we find a more or less encouraging interest in the work of the missionary. In the city of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Calcutta there are three or four European congregations with a peculiarly strong and lively interest in missionary work, and one which leads to generous aid. And experience shows that where a man can gather a small congregation of the kind in a country station, with a few converted people amongst them, and can find means to let them know what his work really is, he is able to awaken a real and helpful sympathy. This sympathy means financial aid. It sometimes means valuable service. It means the chance of employment for our needy Christians, and the growing self-help of the Church ; and it means an increase in the number of those who will be honest witnesses to the value of our work. It means a new concern for the souls of the heathen around, and leads to arrangements for the instruction of servants and the opening of little mission schools.

We could tell of instances of Europeans

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

living Christian lives far from all means of grace, who on the Lord's day have held services for servants and employés and others in their own factories, and been, in other ways, unofficial missionaries. And we know of two or three tea-planters who have acquired a good knowledge of such tongues as Nepalese, and who are always ready to take their turn in the little native mission churches in the hills and valleys of the north. These men make up for a good deal, and they cheer our hearts and encourage our faith.

The British soldier has not the best of reputations, so far as his dealing with the native is concerned. But get him converted to God, and he develops a new interest in them and in their salvation. Before this, they are to him as the off-scouring of the earth, and he finds it necessary to speak of them in lurid language. Now he seeks their souls. We

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

have known earnest tract and Bible work done by the soldiers, and the learning of strange tongues, leading to queer lingual gymnastics, but all meant to aid in the work of the gospel. We have, we believe, at this moment, one or two little soldier societies in the north, each responsible for the support of a small mission station, and the members take a personal interest in the progress of the work of the very keenest kind.

We do not know of many cases in which the wealthy mercantile community has given its support to Christian missions on anything like an adequate scale. It helps work amongst Europeans, and so gives indirect aid, and it responds, generally in a very modest manner, to some appeals for native work. But it does not do what it might do to push forward the enterprise. Perhaps this may be partly explained by the fact that so many concerns are in the form of limited liability companies.

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

The ruling classes, as a whole, cannot be said to be very hearty helpers of our work. But there is one thing which gives most marked encouragement, and that is what we may call the providence of godly governors. We cannot speak as to other divisions of the Empire, but we have been impressed by the way in which the great province of Bengal, with its eighty millions of people, has been favoured with a long succession of godly men at the head of affairs. The Lieutenant-Governor, responsible only to the Viceroy (who is in theory the Governor of Bengal), is the real ruler of those millions. We can remember some seven occupants of that position. One of these was distinctly unfriendly to missions and missionaries, but both managed to survive. The other six have all been more than friendly. They have all taken steps to show how entirely their sympathies were with a work in which they

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

fully believed. We should say that all six have been godly men, and some have been peculiarly strong and outspoken on religious and moral questions. The last was temporarily filling the post, and was a devoted friend of the C.M.S. The present incumbent is an equally staunch Free Churchman, a well-tried friend of the great work, and is, or was, though a Scotsman, a ruling elder in a native Christian congregation. Such men are a great encouragement to our body of missionaries. They are officers who in various provinces have had long and intimate acquaintance with the people and the country, and who have approved themselves as persons of sagacity and judgement. They have too much good sense to attempt to patronize missions ; but they cordially support them. They help in all possible ways, and they speak, where words are weighed, in the most cordial manner of



A BIT OF DANIELLING, 7,000 FEET ABOVE SEA-LEVEL.

THE EUROPEAN IN INDIA

the work they have observed so long and carefully. One would never desire to hear more just estimates of the work and more warm-hearted endorsements of it than we have had from such men as these.

This is what we call the providence of godly rulers. When *our* governors were so foolish as to forbid the pioneer Baptist missionaries to labour in Calcutta, God had a man ready, fifteen miles off,—Colonel Bié, the Danish Governor of Serampore,—to receive them. When the critical days of darkness and danger came upon the North-West, God had manned the posts with men like John and Henry Lawrence, Herbert Edwardes, and John Nicholson. And in our days of transition, and of much movement of the native mind, God has given us these rulers in Bengal—friends of missions, helpers of the work. Would that all were like-minded !

XV

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

When Warren Hastings ruled—Suttee fires—An appalling mortality—Interloping missionaries—A muzzled press—Domestic slavery common—The great servant question—Smoking the hookah—A somewhat liberal dietary—Public entertainments—Shopping and its excitements—Matrimonial ventures—The graveyards.

MOST of our sketches are concerned with Indian life as it is to-day. But it may be of interest to some to see how our exiled countrymen lived in the days when Warren Hastings ruled in Bengal, and when journeying thither was a very serious adventure indeed. It then took six months to reach Calcutta, now within sixteen days of London.

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

Perhaps our heading is hardly a correct one, though the residents of the City of Palaces seem to have enjoyed themselves fairly well, on the whole. But Indian cities were then most undelightful places, and it must have taken a good deal of resolution to keep men cheerful. *Suttee* fires, for the slaying of Hindu widows, were still to be seen burning.¹ Sacred bulls roamed about the streets, to the annoyance of the people, in arrogant freedom, and at the landing places, *aghoris*, members of a horrible sect of outcasts, were sometimes to be seen feasting on the flesh of the dead. Nothing could be more desperately dangerous than the lack of all proper sanitation, and the inadequate and impure supply of water. Instead of drains there was an extensive system of ditches, deep in mud, and occasionally made more interesting

¹ Even later, just a century ago, 115 widows were burned alive near Calcutta within six months (Buchanan).

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

by the carcasses of dead animals and dead men. These finally found their way into the canals, or afforded employment for those useful scavengers, the jackals. No wonder, all things considered, that the fortunate survivors of the hot and rainy seasons held an annual feast about the end of October to celebrate their remarkable preservation! All persons who wished to be allowed to reside in the country were expected to obtain formal permission from the Company, which was given in a document of great length and legal form. People who were found without a licence ten miles from the Presidency might be packed off on board ship without delay. Missionaries were looked upon as interlopers, and compelled, even in the nineteenth century, to betake themselves outside the Company's territories.

Newspaper editors had to be careful, and some of them brought themselves into

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

serious trouble with the Government, not always undeservedly. The first newspaper of Bengal was Hickey's *Bengal Gazette*, and it was a somewhat scurrilous production. Finally proceedings were taken against Hickey, and he was cast into jail, whence he pluckily kept up the fight. He spoke of his paper as an 'antibilious specific,' and it was certainly a lively production, but it brought him into difficulties, and at last to ruin. No one can say what finally became of this troublesome pioneer of the press, or whether he ever so much as escaped the clutches of the law. He is interesting chiefly from his position at the head of a now numerous band.

Lawyers, doctors, and undertakers flourished from early days. Of the first it was said that the answer to a civil question brought him sixteen rupees, and the writing of the briefest letter twenty-eight. The attorneys on the Court roll

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

formed a small and select band of a dozen, so that they had plenty of business, and kept things very much to themselves. As to the undertakers, it is obvious that such a death-rate as Calcutta once knew must have made their business prosper, and it was said that the good-will of a rainy season was worth five thousand pounds to the profession.

About a hundred and twenty years ago we are told that 'the gilded youth of the period rather affected being attended by an African slave or two from Bourbon or Mauritius, who to their other accomplishments added that of being able to play on the French horn.' It would rather disturb the equanimity of a modern hostess were the Calcutta young man of to-day, on being asked for his contribution towards an evening's entertainment, to respond by producing his faithful Sambo with the brazen horn. It is difficult to trace with

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

any certainty the growth of the slave-keeping custom, but by about 1770 it had become so general, and so legalized by use, that a man's absolute right to his slaves of both sexes was upheld in the law courts, and any attempt to escape from bondage was sharply punished. In the police charge sheets of 1778 there occur several cases of slave girls who were brought up for running away. One of them, 'Peggy,' received five strokes of the rattan, as did the second. The third, Sarah, an old offender, who had been audacious enough to attempt the same wickedness several times, got fifteen. These offenders were duly returned to their masters. In a case of robbery a Mr. Levitt produces 'one of his slave girls, named Polly,' as a credible and sufficient witness. A few years afterwards the public press loudly protested against 'the barbarous and wanton acts of more than savage cruelty exercised on

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the slaves of both sexes by that mongrel race called the native Portuguese.' It is quite evident that, in its own unhappy way, the 'peculiar institution' flourished in Calcutta a hundred years ago. The most interesting evidence of the fact is now to be found in the reprints of the old *Calcutta Gazette*. Very little is to be gleaned from editorials, but the advertisements give us, in this as in other matters, most interesting glimpses of the curious ways of that bygone time. Nothing is more common, and at the same time nothing, to our modern ideas, more painful, than the frequent advertisement for the runaway slave ; and occasionally stray remarks in other columns remind us how common and how little regarded was the serfdom. For instance, in the *Gazette* of November 16, 1786, an account is given of the state of the garrison of Fort St. George forty years before. There we have the names of two

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

drummers, both of whom were slave boys.

It was not considered a very terrible matter to assert one's ownership of human flesh by branding it, much as men now brand a horse. On December 2, 1784, a certain Valentine Dubois, a lieutenant, of Chunar, advertises for two slave boys who had run away, and who had stolen a considerable quantity of plate, &c. They were named respectively Sam and Tom, and had both attained the mature age of eleven years. These hardened criminals were each marked on the right arm, above the elbow, with the letters 'V.D.,' and for their apprehension a reward of a hundred rupees was offered. On the seventeenth of June, in the same year, a Malay slave boy is said to have 'eloped.' A careful description of the runaway is given. 'Gentlemen are earnestly requested to detain him, should he offer himself as a

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

servant. His name is Wilks.' We read that 'Malver, hairdresser from Europe,' who is ready to officiate at two gold mohurs¹ per month (reasonable man!), is prepared also 'to instruct slaves at a moderate price.' In December, 1785, two Malay slave boys 'ran away from the house lately occupied by the Rev. Mr. Blanchard.' We sincerely hope that they were not the chattels of the reverend gentleman himself. They did not go empty away, but took property in the shape of money and jewellery to the value of some thousands of rupees. In such a case one does not feel very keenly for the loser. A letter from Dacca, dated September 13, 1787, tells of famine in Eastern Bengal, and the writer, in describing the sufferings of the time, says: 'I am told that parents sell their children as slaves for a few rupees, an incontrovertible proof of extreme misery

¹ Then well over £3.

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

and want.' What would become of such children we cannot tell, but it is probable that such slavery would be quite local, and that the miserable victims of such sad necessity would become serfs upon the soil. The slaves of the city were chiefly Malays and Coffrees, the latter being of African extraction, brought from such places as the Isle of France. It may be interesting to have the full text of one of the curious advertisements of those days. We choose one in which the description is minutely full and even picturesque. It does not require a very lively imagination to bring the young fellow vividly before the mind's eye. The advertisement is dated May 17, 1787, and reads as follows : ' Run away.—A slave boy, fourteen or fifteen years old ; four feet eight or nine inches high ; stout made ; dark yellowish colour ; a little pockmarked ; full face ; short nose ; had on, when he eloped,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

an old turban, which had been blue, old nankeen jacket, bannian shirt ; a pair of trousers made of Europe check ; a pair of shoes with round buckles. The little finger of his right hand contracted by being formerly cut ; his voice somewhat effeminate ; answers to the name of Christmas ; called by his late master Antony. One gold mohur will be given to any person who will bring him to R. Hollier, near the old Fouzdar's house.' Sixteen rupees was surely not a high reward to offer for this curiosity.

On July 27, 1789, a proclamation was issued against slavery, so it became an illegal thing. But the Honourable Company itself was slave dealing up to 1764.

Before we pass to some other peculiar accompaniments of the life of olden days, we may add one or two further facts as to slaves and slavery. For some time previous to the period of which we speak there

· IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

had been an open and flourishing traffic in human flesh. The Portuguese had commenced this wretched business, and they still managed to keep the market well supplied. From a very early date they had been in the habit of dealing with the people of the coast much as the Arabs do with the defenceless Africans of to-day ; and before there was any market worth mentioning in India, they shipped off their captives to the Cape, and sold them to the Dutch. The *East India Chronicle* of 1758 gives a harrowing account of the cruelties of the slave-catching pirates, Mugs and Portuguese, in the southern parts of Bengal ; and so much were these scoundrels feared that a chain was once thrown across the Hooghly, just below Garden Reach, to keep them away from the city. Later on, the business of slave dealing became profitable in Bengal. The victims were regularly purchased, and registered at the Court-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

house, and each slave paid a duty of Rs. 4-8 to the Company. In 1781 the following sale advertisement appeared: 'Two Coffree boys, who play remarkably well on the French horn, belonging to a Portuguese Padry, lately deceased. Enquire of the Vicar of the Portuguese Church.' Another advertisement gives an idea of the value of such commodities as these: 'To be sold, a fine Coffree boy, that understands the business of a butler, &c. Price four hundred sicca rupees. Gentlemen may see him by applying to the printer.'

Perhaps our countrymen found the slave preferable to the servant. The complaints about the latter individual are constant and sometimes affecting. One indignant lady tells of a fellow who demanded double wages, only because she had made herself aware of the exact prices current in the bazaar. The correspondence columns of the *Gazette* contain doleful protests against

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

the iniquity of the domestic. Englishmen are exhorted, without much effect, to band together, resist all extortion, and fix a schedule of wages. A town meeting was called for April 13, 1786, to discuss the momentous subject, but the result does not seem to have been worth record. Now and again the authorities interfered, as in 1759, when an elaborate scale was drawn up, with much tender regard to the pockets of the master. In 1787 the good people of Calcutta succeeded in drawing up another, which appears to have been about as much use as the same kind of thing would be to-day. Certainly, grumbling did not cease.

Some of the indispensable assistants of those days are strangers to the moderns. Europeans do not now hear much of the *chubdar* or mace bearer, the *chattabadar* or umbrella carrier, the *hukabadar*, or the *abdar*; and the *masalchi*, or man of

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

torches, has quite changed his occupation. Probably their losses are not to be deplored. In 1780 we are informed that a captain in garrison required 'about thirty servants.' These included a pipe bearer (the *huk-abadar*), eight bearers for the palankeen, and a link-boy. Most captains would find no small difficulty in keeping thirty servants now. The *abdar* was the walking refrigerator of those days. He went with his master to every dinner party, and the compound, during the meal, would sometimes be half-filled with noisy *abdars*, cooling master's wine by the aid of saltpetre, after the approved, and not altogether inefficient, manner of the time. Concerning the hookah, or water pipe, we may note that it was the common accompaniment of the dinner-table, and it was considered a delicate attention if a gentleman took from his pocket a silver mouth-piece, and offered the whole apparatus to

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

the lady next him. Should she accept, the gallant one felt himself highly honoured.

Says Grand Pre : ' It is scarcely possible to see through the cloud of smoke which fills the apartment. The rage of smoking extends even to the ladies, and the highest compliment they can pay a man is to give him preference by smoking his hookah.' Then comes the little ceremony above described. An invitation by Mr. and Mrs. Hastings to a concert and supper, dated October 1, 1779, requests that no servants may be brought, except the 'houccabardar.' He was evidently indispensable. Another striking feature at some of these functions was that of cardboard cases or sheaths worn on the leg, as a protection against the vicious mosquito. The gentleman who ventured to dine over half a mile from the centre of the town paid his palki bearers double fare, in consideration both of the distance and the danger ; and

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the servants came home not singly, but in small detachments ; for, as we have said, dacoity was by no means rare in such remote and jungly neighbourhoods.

The washerman of those days was not the exemplary character that he says he is to-day. It is set forth in an advertisement of 1787 that the public have long laboured under great and crying inconveniences from frequent losses of their clothes, and from other neglect of the washermen. Consequently Messrs. Davidson & Co. have set up works for the ' business of washing and mangling ' (after the Europe method). The ' well getting up ' of the linen was to be a great feature of the business. Considering that judges in the Courts sometimes changed their linen four times in the course of the day's work, there should have been a fine field for the enterprise, but the apathetic public does not seem to have encouraged this novel

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

interference with the *dhobi*. It goes unhappily on in the old way still.

Finally, to complete the service of the household, the hairdresser must be called in. He was on visiting terms with all the fine ladies of Calcutta, and with many of the gentlemen too. Even here the curious customs of Europe had to be observed, and the wig-maker flourished. A certain Nawab is said to have employed an English peruke-maker to fit him out with 'two wigs of every denomination, according to the English fashion, viz. scratches, cut wigs, curled bobs, queues, mafors, and ramillies.' This was doubtless a somewhat rare order, but business was constantly brisk, and prices ruled high. 'Lafleur, lately from Paris, dresses hair according to the fashion. He takes four rupees for dressing a lady, two rupees for a gentleman, and six rupees for cutting hair.' A lady of eclectic tendencies 'washes silk

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

stockings, clear starches in general, and dresses hair in the most fashionable manner.' We have already spoken of the artist who is willing to become the instructor of slaves.

The dietary of the times was fearful and wonderful indeed. It is well known that the death-rate was high, but the marvel is that it was not a great deal higher. The most unsuitable food was largely eaten, and often at the most ill-chosen hours. Oysters were a much esteemed delicacy, and were by no means rare. One tavern keeper of the town found it necessary to raise the price of them, owing to the roguery of his servants, who sold his wares on the river-bank, and made what did reach his hands so much the more costly. The London Tavern had a contract for a regular supply. Turtle is also much in request, and at one time appears to be scarce, but shortly after-

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

wards it may be easily obtained of 'Mr. Wright, at the New Tavern near the church, who intends dressing one on Saturday.' One intellectual person, who has been bred a cook, can dress dinners with the truest propriety, the more especially 'as he studies nothing else.' We are informed that the peculiar gastronomic taste of the time was well met by such a production as 'the Burdwan Stew,' composed of flesh, fish, and fowl, prepared in a silver saucepan. In addition to such curious and satisfying provision, the gentlemen who affected company were in the habit of emptying two and three bottles of wine at dinner, and they left the bottles piled on the tables as trophies of their prowess. The ladies consumed one bottle per diem. Thanks to excellent constitutions, a considerable number of them managed to survive. The inhabitants took life easily. In Mackintosh's travels we are

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

told that the Englishman rises at eight o'clock, and at nine finds his way to the breakfast parlour, where the hairdresser does his part ; while his victim is eating, sipping, and smoking. At two o'clock comes dinner, while work is not mentioned, but presumably it fills this modest interval. Dinner is taken perfectly at ease, after which our hero retires to his bedroom, whence he emerges at seven or eight o'clock to make his visits of ceremony. Tea follows, or supper, at ten o'clock, and the company breaks up at twelve or one, 'having preserved great sobriety and decency.' This is not an exhausting record for an ordinary day.

Of course, there were opportunities of special diversion and excitement, for we must not suppose that the many and varied entertainments of modern Calcutta are peculiar to these gay days of progress. With our predecessors things were by no

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

means dull, and, all things considered, they were very well off for amusement. In 1788 a notice appears to the effect that 'Such are the attractions of Calcutta in the present cold season, that two ladies who intended to return to Europe on the *Phœnix* have resolved to remain for the present, and proceed by one of the last ships.' This surely speaks volumes for the delights of the olden days. The Old Court House, in what was then the centre of the European town, was the favourite place of entertainment, and sometimes the fare was of a very solid character. We read of an occasion on which the chief items of the performance were Handel's *Judas Maccabeus* and *The Music of Macbeth*. Of a much lighter character were the subscription 'Assemblies,' held in the same building. The subscribers paid Rs. 100, or £10, each for the season, and were handsomely provided

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

for. At the Harmonicon Tavern, in 1780, a select number of gentlemen, each in alphabetical rotation, gave concerts, balls, and suppers during the cold season. At the London Hotel a dish of coffee could be had at the low price of two shillings, which included the use of the English newspapers *six months old* ! At the theatre the performers were all men, and generally amateurs ; and though for a time the institution enjoyed official favour, there were too many big suppers and free tickets to allow of any great prosperity. Lord Cornwallis, on his arrival, frowned on the struggling enterprise, and its remaining glory soon passed away.

In 1786, Calcutta listened to the oratorio of *The Messiah*, then something of a novelty. The performance was given at the new theatre, for the benefit of one Mr. Ferdinando. The more usual programme consisted of such items as *The Fair Peni-*

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

tent, High Life below Stairs, and The Waterman. By way of regulating abuses, the managers announced on one occasion that they 'had decided to admit no person behind the scenes, gentlemen who are performers alone excepted.' 'Vauxhall' had been the garden house of a wealthy native, and was laid out in pleasant walks and shady groves. Here fireworks of unheard-of magnificence were provided for the delectation of the settlement. These pyrotechnic efforts were of new invention. Here, by the aid of this brilliant art, for the paltry price of sixteen rupees, Calcutta might see 'Jupiter metamorphosed into a shower of gold.'

St. Andrew's Day was an institution in Calcutta more than a century ago. In 1785 it was celebrated with great enthusiasm at no less a place than Government House. Moreover, in those days the City of Palaces boasted a cricket club, although it was

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

not much to boast about, for it was most decidedly unsuccessful. Billiards, however, flourished, and open provision was made for heavy gambling. So notorious did the scandals of the green cloth become that, on this, as on much else in the way of doubtful entertainment, Lord Cornwallis at last came down in a very decided manner.

English ladies were few. In consequence there was much licence and immorality. The spacious *Bebeekhana*, or women's quarter, was the fashion in a large house, and is to be easily distinguished still, though no longer the zenana in many an old building. There is a very fine specimen at Cossipore. Englishmen often fell into ways of living like wealthy Mohammedans. Captain Williamson, writing in 1800, tells of a certain major who kept quite a harem of sixteen ladies, and who, asked how he managed so many, said:



OLD HINDU TEMPLE AT ALDEEN,
USED AS AN ORATORY BY HENRY MARTYN A CENTURY AGO.

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

‘ Oh, I give them a little rice and let them run about.’ This state of things was tolerated in very good society.

In those days, as at present, ladies found much innocent and not inexpensive diversion in the ‘ stores,’ which occupied the place of the universal ‘ supply establishments of to-day.’ ‘ Asiaticus’ says that the ‘ Europe shops are literally magazines of European articles, either of luxury or convenience’; and adds that they are the rendezvous of the idle and the gay, who here purchase at an immoderate price the frippery of Tavistock Street and propagate the scandal of the hour. Even the monthly list of the cash draper had its prototype in the advertisement of the ventures, or ‘ investments’ as they were called, of ship captains, who did a profitable private trade in this direction. One such list occupies eight large and closely printed pages, and is

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

made up of an astonishing variety of articles,—liquors and eatables of all descriptions, plate and cutlery, jewellery, stationery, glassware, furniture, saddlery, perfumery, and almost everything one needs even in these latter days. One Captain Dance, in 1787, appears to have found no ready market for his goods, and endeavoured to dispose of them by a huge raffle. The most common articles of advertisement were wines, horses, dogs, and houses. Even the Company did a little business in Madeira. It imported a large quantity annually for the use of its servants, and any surplus, when they were well supplied, was sold to the public at the rate of about Rs. 600 per pipe of forty dozen. The wine was then treasured up by careful owners until its value became enormously increased.

These were not the only goods for disposal in the city. The English ships

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

brought cargoes of venturesome humanity on matrimony bent. Most careful calculations of cost, risks, and bright possibilities were made by anxious British parents in the interests of their daughters. The matter was purely a business one. We read of eleven ladies arriving in one vessel. On such occasions great parties were given by some well-known ladies of the settlement, and the candidates for wifedom 'sat up,' as it was called, for three or four nights in succession, while all the would-be Benedicts of the fashionable town thronged to the reception. The parties seem to have generally gone on for three nights, but sometimes, to accommodate bachelors from the country districts, the ladies sat up for a fourth. There were 'no punkahs in those days, there was much tight-lacing, and much crowd,' so that the sufferings of some of these English damsels must sometimes have been considerable.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Old Grand Pre takes a very prosaic view of these functions. He says: 'The English, who are much inclined to all manner of speculating, send to India annually whole cargoes of females, who are tolerably handsome, and who are seldom in the country six months without finding husbands.' It was said to cost £5,000 to fairly land a lady here well fitted out; and Edinburgh was called 'the market for the Indian marriage mart.' It not seldom happened that matches were arranged during the evenings on which the ladies were on exhibition, and it is said that these peculiar methods often resulted in sufficiently happy alliances.

A single passage home in those days might cost £300; while a family occasionally paid as much as £2,500 for a commodious cabin for the voyage. People had to think twice before they went globe-trotting at such rates as these; and even the taking

IN THE GOOD OLD DAYS

of leave was a very serious matter. So, although money was fairly plentiful, and life was gay, a sadly large proportion of our exiled kinsfolk never saw old England's shores again, but left their bones to lie under the solid and forbidding monuments of the old burying grounds of Calcutta. All churchyards and cemeteries are places of sad reflection and sorrowful memories ; those of an Indian city are perhaps the saddest and most sorrowful of all.

XVI

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

The ancient monuments—The sadness of the Indian funeral—Rose Aylmer and Walter Savage Landor—The grave of Thackeray's father—The founder of Calcutta—The cities of the Mutiny—The graves of Nicholson, Lawrence, and Havelock—Serampore and its missionaries—William Carey's tomb.

WE have said that there is a peculiar sadness connected with the churchyard and the cemetery in India. If it be one claiming even a modest antiquity, it is crowded with memorials of people who never expected to leave their dust in a land of exile, but always hoped and planned for the quiet eventide at home. In the older burying grounds, amongst many graceful and beautiful monuments, there are some of the most ugly and for-

THE DIKUSHA PALACE, IN THE GROUNDS OF WHICH HAVELOCK DIED.



SOME INDIAN GRAVES

bidding character, generally in the form of the massive pyramid, entablatured with long and eulogistic biographical sketches, and lending a superfluous grimness and horror to the place. The newer cemeteries do not thus offend the eye, and hardly differ from similar places in the homeland. India is a land of sharp and sudden sickness, and of swift decease. It is especially hard upon the early years of life, and many a family now far from that sultry clime possesses its tiny freehold in some God's Acre there, and ever feels that something of its own heart and life is left in that distant land. And many an English household which has sent forth its dear ones, full of hope and promise, to life's adventure there, has, after a few years, found that all the earthly hope was vain. It possesses nothing now more dear than the picture of a lonely grave, dug beneath the palm-trees and domed by the Indian sky.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Some of the most painful hours that fall to a minister in India are those spent at the funeral service; the circumstances are naturally so peculiarly sad and pathetic. If he spends a few waiting moments in walking amongst the tombs, the most striking fact he will notice will probably be the way in which men and women have been laid to rest before life's weariness should have come at all, in the midst of the years of fullest strength and energy. And, when the sad procession appears, it will probably be that of some bright young fellow from a merchant's office; or one who has been rising in Government service; or a soldier lad, but a day or two ago in the full vigour of life, and now, far from all who have loved him, laid to his long rest. In the Indian cemetery there is place for thoughts and prayers and tears of which we do not know much at home.

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

Then as to the swiftness and suddenness of things. It will happen sometimes that you will be doing business with a man on Monday morning, and next day at breakfast-time you receive an invitation to his funeral, for that same evening. You then learn that he has been seized by a violent illness which has run its course in a few hours, and that the only question about the funeral had been whether it should not have been earlier ! These things are, happily, somewhat exceptional, but they do occur.

In the South Park Street Cemetery, in Calcutta, there is a grave which has more than local fame. It is that of Rose Aylmer, whose name is associated with that of the accomplished Walter Savage Landor. Rose Aylmer was the younger daughter of a noble family, and she went out to Calcutta to her aunt, Lady Russell, wife of one of the Judges of the High Court, who was

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

afterwards Chief Justice there. In the first week of March 1800, the *Calcutta Gazette* says, under the head of 'Death': 'On Sunday last, at the house of her uncle, Sir Henry Russell, in the bloom of youth, and possessed of every accomplishment that could gladden or embellish life . . . the Honble. Miss Aylmer.' She was but twenty years of age, but had made an extremely deep impression on Landor, while staying for a time in Wales; and, long after, the poet's verse bore traces of his sorrow. When the news reached him, he wrote the lines which made so great an impression on Charles Lamb :

Ah, what avails the sceptred race,
Ah, what the form divine,
What every virtue, every grace,—
Rose Aylmer, all were thine!
Rose Aylmer, whom these wakeful eyes
May weep, but never see,
A night of memories and sighs
I consecrate to thee.

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

Crabbe Robinson said of Landor, ‘He is ever muttering “Rose Aylmer.”’ Her monument is easily found to-day, and bears a black marble slab with a very simple inscription.

In the same unlovely cemetery is the grave of Sir William Jones, the famous Oriental scholar and translator. His monument is near the centre of the ground, and is one of those lofty brick pyramids to which we have referred, bearing an enormously long inscription. But he was a man of great abilities, and of tireless industry, who achieved much by what we should reckon life’s noonday, and he justified a long inscription better than did some who were honoured by them.

On the other side of the road, and thus within a few yards of this cemetery, there is another, and here lies the dust of Richmond Thackeray, under an ungraceful monument of brick and plaster, not,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

however, a pyramid. On July 18, 1811, his famous son, William Makepeace Thackeray, was born in Free-School Street, Calcutta, and on September 13, two years afterwards, the future novelist was left fatherless. At about the age of six, the boy came home to England, but the impress of the early Indian life was never effaced from his mind and heart, as all his readers know.

The oldest piece of masonry extant in the city is the tomb of Job Charnock, an honest and intrepid servant of the Honourable Company, who, deterred neither by difficulty nor danger, founded the British settlement of Calcutta. But his last years were embittered by misunderstandings on which he brooded sorely, and he died in the early days of 1693. The old burying ground, which also holds the dust of Surgeon Hamilton, of Admiral Watson, and of the famous 'Billy Speke,' the

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

midshipman, afterwards became a part of the churchyard of St. John's, the old Cathedral of Calcutta.

Surgeon Hamilton was the unselfish man who went to Delhi in those dangerous days, to endeavour to cure the illness of the Great Mogul. When he was successful, and might claim almost anything he cared to ask, all that he sought was to gain advantage and privilege for the Company he served. He did not know how scurvily, when his back was turned, his honourable masters were serving him. They did some little penance for their injustice, and the Emperor at Delhi treated Hamilton very handsomely, but he died in Calcutta in 1717.

Of Watson, who was at least a good fighter, we read in the pages of Macaulay; and as to the brave little midddy, Billy Speke, who died from dreadful wounds, received at the siege of Chandernagore, or

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Fort Orleans, the story of his patient heroism and self-forgetful filial devotion should be read in Hunter's *Thackerays in India*, and it will hardly be read without a tear. The Calcutta graveyards, says Sir William, 'are sown thick with heroes.'

But we have given space enough to one city, and we will pass now to a distant spot.

No native of these isles can visit places like Delhi, Lucknow, and Cawnpore, without feeling his heart's blood stirred within him.

Just outside the walls of Delhi is the grave of the heroic soldier, John Nicholson. When the writer was endeavouring, long years ago, to see the sights of that famous city, he was invited to visit the grave of a person whose name he could not at first recognize—it was that of 'Jan Nikhal Sayn.' It was by some such set of sounds that the natives, some of whom actually offered him worship, and were punished

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

for their pains, knew that strong and resolute man. It will be remembered that at the end of the long siege, in the hour of the final assault, exposing his life after his own reckless fashion, he fell, mortally wounded; after agonizing suffering he died in his tent on the Ridge; and he was laid to rest, amidst the sincerest sorrow, in this little graveyard. His fame is still undying in the far North-West. There now dwell the children of the men who loved him, feared him, and tried to worship him. 'They say that the hoofs of his war-horse are still to be heard riding at night in the Peshawar Valley, and they believe that, until that sound dies away, the Empire of the Feringhees will endure.' When Henry Lawrence died, this strong soul wrote to Herbert Edwardes: 'You must be my guide and help in endeavouring to follow his example.' Thus beneath his busy and strenuous life, with all its

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

imperfections, lay the deep desire for the best and highest things.

Of Henry Lawrence and his grave we have spoken already, in our first chapter. We quoted there the simple and touching inscription upon his tomb. He was a man of such a stamp that even the strong and self-reliant, capable of any deed of valour, or any task of difficulty, might well look to him, as did John Nicholson, for help and inspiration. Very early in the siege of the Residency, a shell burst in the room in which he was at work, but he escaped injury. His staff besought him to move to a less exposed spot, and he proposed to do so the next morning. Before the time came at which he intended to remove, another shell came crashing through the wall, and gave him a deadly wound. So in a few hours passed away the man who seemed, above all others, to be needed to cheer and sustain the

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

hearts of all in that dark and cloudy day. The well-known inscription was that which he himself directed should be placed upon his tomb. His men loved him. A little band of soldiers was detailed to carry him to his grave. Before they lifted the body, one of them raised the coverlet, and stooped down to kiss the forehead of his dead leader, and then all his comrades did the same. That was surely a very touching and pathetic scene, and one that told a very beautiful story. The grave is well cared for, in a garden which is now a place of rest and peace. It is only when one examines the ruined walls of the Residency, and the gateways scarred with shot and shell, and bespattered with the hail of bullets, that one can at all reconstruct the awful scenes of 1857.

The grave of a far more famous hero is not so well known, because it lies at a rather remote spot. Having nobly and

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

successfully discharged the duty that fell to him in the Relief, and having escaped the weapons of the enemy, Henry Havelock fell a victim to disease; and to the deep sorrow not only of his friends and comrades, but of the whole nation, he died on November 24, 1857. He had been removed, for greater comfort, to the grounds of the Dilkusha Palace, the head quarters of Sir Colin Campbell, and there it soon became evident that he would not recover. Just before the end, Sir James Outram, 'the Bayard of India,' came to his tent, and Havelock said, 'For more than forty years I have so ruled my life, that, when death came, I might face it without fear. I die happy and contented.' The grave, with its severely simple monument, is not in the Dilkusha Garden, but in the Alum Bagh, an enclosure at some distance off, and it is thus often overlooked; but those who

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

visit Lucknow, and know something of the toils and triumphs of the deliverers, would not willingly miss Havelock's grave.

Before closing this chapter, we wish to speak of another group of tombs, and to visit them we must journey back to Bengal. There, about fifteen miles above Calcutta, is the once Danish Settlement of Serampore. Here and there in the old town may be seen gateways or houses, proudly bearing the monogram of some bygone Charles or Frederick of Denmark. But nobody thinks of those departed royalties now. The decayed settlement only lives in the memories of men because there dwelt and died such pioneer missionaries as Carey, Marshman, and Ward. Here the good work was established when British territory was closed to the gospel. Here these good men set up their printing press, and here they provided it with the most profitable work of all—by trans-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

lating into many tongues the Word of God. Here they laboured on through good report and ill, and when trouble and misunderstanding arose with the Society at home, they still toiled hard, and with great self-sacrifice sustained the work. One of Sydney Smith's 'consecrated cobblers,' William Carey, became at last a Professor in the Company's College of Fort William, and he put his handsome salary into the work of the mission. Here they saw the beginning of success and laid the solid foundations for the successes of other men, and here all three at last lay down to die. William Ward went first, in 1823, at the age of fifty-three. In 1834, good old William Carey passed away, in his seventy-third year, and, last of that faithful band, the close companions of three-and-twenty years of labour, Dr. Marshman died in 1837, aged nearly seventy.



CAREY'S TOMB.

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

In a quiet part of the town lies the cemetery, largely provided for native Christians, but many Europeans have now been buried there. And there lies that which is mortal of these three good soldiers of Christ. Lovely and pleasant in their lives, in their death they were not divided. Together they had faced many a grievous difficulty, and weathered many a threatening storm. For long they had carried on their work apart from the Society's aid; and it is calculated that, living and dying as poor men, they had earned and spent between them £80,000, devoting all to the work of God. We give an illustration of William Carey's tomb. On the upper part of the marble tablet is the famous inscription, placed there by his own direction—

A wretched, poor, and helpless worm,
On Thy kind arms I fall.

Our meditations among the tombs shall end by the side of William Carey's grave.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

In the same cemetery are the monuments erected to his colleagues, but this is the corner of the ground towards which all feet turn ; and the dust of this one man may remind us of all the courage and devotion of those who led the fighting-line so long ago. Their works do follow them. Not in Serampore, in the graveyard, or the College, or the Church, is their real monument, but in the wide-spreading influence of the gospel, in the many translations of the Word, and in the great spiritual temple, the walls of which are slowly rising in India to-day. Unspeakable is the debt we owe to those brave pioneers.

The graves of our kindred are now to be found in every part of that great possession. Soldiers and statesmen, merchants and missionaries, women and children—how many lie there in that land of regrets ! The graves of India are enough to make its soil for ever sacred to our forgetful

SOME INDIAN GRAVES

hearts. We have paid our price for all that we have gained, and all that we have done ; and the remembrance of the Christian dead may make us the more earnestly hope and pray for the day when the Master whom they loved and served, and for whom they wait, shall come to His own at last.

XVII

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

‘Babu English’—The native editor and the dictionary
—Some choice extracts—Why widow re-marriage
is impossible—A candid critic—Some queer epistles
—Extracts from a picturesque biography.

MOST Englishmen in India have carefully preserved some few examples of a kind of composition which is unsurpassed for its innocent and unconscious absurdity. A few books have been published on ‘Babu English’ and similar types of language, but one cannot always be certain of the genuineness of all the instances given. It is only fair to say, however, that those which may appear to the armchair critic the most absurdly im-

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

probable are really as likely to be the genuine article as any other. Certainly, none will be noticed in the following pages which are not wholly above suspicion. The originals are all, with many more, which can hardly be wisely reproduced, in the possession of the writer.

The imperfectly educated Indian achieves the most grotesque effects when he comes to deal with the King's English. The native editor is apt to believe that the dictionary is a valuable aid to composition, and he apparently searches there for long and impressive synonyms for simpler terms. Then he produces such an introductory sentence as the following, which begins a leader in a Lahore print :

‘ It being conceded that mutual co-ordination and integration among the individual units of a people is absolutely necessary for national life and stability, the utility of the *Veda Prachar* scheme

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

becomes all the more unquestionable and imperative.'

Such phraseology, meaningless as it must be to most of those who read it, is considered by those who write to be very fine indeed, and to be drawn from a well of English undefiled. A simple directness of style, that would put all this into a forceful line, is by no means admired by the native Indian editor. But some of the writers in the same print are not able to keep up to the high level of the leader. While this may be deplored, it cannot be denied that there is a gain in force and vigour when we read: 'There is a good deal of nonsense in the current number of "——" in regard to the *Pratinidhi* affairs. The editor, it would appear, is not in his elements. He does not know what he is driving at.' Here, probably, courtesy is sacrificed to veracity. Another unconventional announcement is to the effect

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

that, ' this being Coronation Day, the office is closed for the day. This issue of the paper was printed yesterday evening.'

In another native journal we are assured that the country ' has at last come to precision that, unless the rigid conservation of olden times were broken up in some points, we could not hope to keep our pace in the silent and profound hurly-burly of the world.' A ' well-known editor ' says of a certain much advertised preparation : ' I cannot but speak too highly of its virtues.' Yet he really means to recommend it !

Another specimen, also from a Punjab paper, gives us a combination of tragedy and mixed metaphor which it would probably be hard to beat. The writer laments the sordid character of his fellow countrymen in the following pathetic manner :

' Draw a man from his shop, take him to the Samaj, and in many cases you would

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

find, *while the lecturer is blowing out his brains upon some mystic problem*, the pious listener sits contemplating the loss to his business caused by his involuntary absence. It is but seldom that you find people in a religious mood, and when you do so, brother Aryans, make hay while the sun shines.'

And another specimen speaks with an engaging frankness quite unknown to our Western journalism :

The '——' informs us that 'The lecture on "Rising Sun," notified in the last but one issue of this paper, came off in the proper time. Although our friend, the lecturer, Babu K. P. Chatterjee, was not then quite well owing to a very strong pain in the stomach the previous night, but we were not disappointed, and the Baboo, true to his promise, stood up amidst loud cheers and spoke for one full hour with his natural fluency and eloquence.'

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

We learn that at another meeting the subject under discussion was the 'Existence of Souls.' '*Speakers poured in one by one* ; the last two requesting to speak were not allowed for want of time.'

Certain columns of the census returns are put to a new and ingenious use by a reactionary Bengali editor, who says :

'Not a shadow of a doubt remains now as to the utter impossibility of widow re-marriage amongst us. Let the reformers pause for a minute and take breath in their headlong impetuosity. It is shown that there are in Bengal at least 232,575 more women than men. What does it prove ? Does it not definitely settle the point that if we are to introduce widow marriage in our midst, at least 232,575 women shall have to pass their lives in "single blessedness" ? Perhaps the advanced section, with English allies, does not care much whether a number of girls remain un-

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

married. But have they sounded the women whether they would like to be so ? We pause for a reply.'

Here is a somewhat candid criticism on one of our Viceroys,—not, be it said, the last who laid down that exalted office :

'We do not know how far there is any foundation for the rumour of the ill-health of Lord ——, but if sourness and irritability of temper are indication of ill-health, we must admit that our noble Viceroy has not been keeping a very good health. His utterances in the Council Chamber during the passing of the disputed Bill are positive manifestations of failing health.'

With one more extract we will end our selections from the press. The following is an account of the attendant circumstances on the occasion of the laying of the foundation-stone of a philanthropic institution in Calcutta, and it is from the

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

pen of a Brahmo scribe. It is a remarkable example of making the best of things, and is in a style of reporting to which we are somewhat unaccustomed. The ceremony took place during a violent storm.

‘Nature seemed to be stirred by a mysterious movement, as if in sympathy with the beneficent work and object of the meeting : the clouds, which had been gathering before, now rolled in condensed masses, lightning flashed, and a gentle shower of rain streamed down. *The drizzling rain was no other than the tears of joy shed by radiant angels.* The repeated claps of thunder, were they not the loud blast of eternal trumpets, proclaiming by unmistakable signs the appreciation of blessed and divine beings of the exertions of the congregation to alleviate the misery and better the condition of the deaf and dumb ? A small portion of the roofing was blown off by a gust of wind, and the manifestations

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

in the heaven disclosed themselves to the wondering eyes of the occupants of the pandal. While His Honour was placing the mortar the rains suddenly, as if miraculously, ceased, and the whole assembly looked up with joy and wonder towards the heavens. All the circumstances about the gathering on this auspicious occasion clearly and conclusively proved that God and His angels blessed the holy and pious work then formally launched forth. Such manifestations of divine grace are of very rare occurrence, and when they do happen every spiritual heart should hail them with gratitude towards God.'

Here are a few specimens of the kind of thing our Aryan brother thinks appropriate to a useful epistolary style. The first is typical of a large number of letters which are sent as applications for employment. There is certainly an unconscious irony in the fact that the candidate desires a post

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

as a teacher. The mere heading is calculated to attract attention.

‘TO MRS. — Esq.

‘SIR,—. . . I have more than once appeared for the Entrance Examination, but unluckily failed ; excepting this I know drawing, Urdu, Persian, and has studied Sanskrit Grammar and Poetry.

‘I wish to know your terms, and the salary per month which you will pay me for. I have often been working in the Mission Schools, and has also a taste in teaching the missionary men privately at their bungalows. Seven months ago, as I had heard something of your such intention, so I went there with this purpose really, but learnt there that you had employed a Master, then I did not dare to meet you while the reason of your ill-will was the actual cause of my apprehension.

‘I hope that you will be kind enough to reply this humble letter with your best wishes.
‘Yours, &c.’

Another candidate recalls the fact that God is called the Almighty, Omnipotent,

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

Omnipresent, Omniscient, and ends by requesting that the 'charitable honour' to whom he writes will 'mercifully cut the guardian's knot in such crisis and distress.'

The following effusion was sent to a Government servant by a native friend :

'SIR,—These eight mangoes are for your children. I ate two of these yesterday and I felt them sweet, and forthwith this feeling raised to give you. I consider you as a noble man of most exalted mind and without anger. It will not be too much to state that I never met a person either among native or European with whom I came in contact with business or in some way I can compare him with you in temper. Sir, kindly accept these mangoes to start a talk about me in the breakfast table with our most noble-minded Madam whom God has selected rightly for your ever companion in this world. Kindly carry my most respectful and hearty *salam* to her.

'Your most obediently, &c.'

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

A clerk employed by a European firm, having addressed a circular to His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, thought it well to address a second to 'Her Honour the Lieutenant-Governess'; and another addressed an invoice to 'Messrs. Wesleyan Parsonage & Co.' A native gentleman writes indignantly of some offender, that 'he has proved a disgrace to the education nowadays imparted by the Calcutta University. These monsters of men should be kicked off the sacred pale of human society.' Yet another writes to a leading newspaper in the following vivid style, reporting a thunderstorm at Bhagulpur. He finishes his account, and then deals with the interesting subject of electricity as follows : 'Two sowars of some rajah lost control of their animals, which were seen galloping off at a breakneck pace; and all this, and moreover one solitary discharge of electricity, man's most useful and most potent

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

instrument of future days, reserved for times when, all else shall fail him, or their utility lost, before this energy, swifter than ball, and mightier than the mightiest of elements ; or than they combined ; subtlest of the subtle, permitting air, fire, and water, checked by nothing, checking everything, destroying everything, and destroyed by nothing.'

We will close this chapter by a reference to a most curious book published in Calcutta by Thacker, Spink & Co. a good many years ago. It is difficult to believe that it was written and published in all seriousness, but it was, and it has enjoyed a modest fame ever since, having been several times reprinted. It is one of the best examples of what is known as Babu English, and is really a very entertaining little book. It is the Life of Mr. Justice Onocool Chunder Mookerjee, of the Calcutta High Court, and from it we may make a

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

few very brief quotations. It is interesting to note that the author is also the writer of a work entitled *The Effects of English Education upon the Native Mind*. He takes up what he calls his *penna* in order to tell us how ‘a private individual, unaided by any, by dint of nude energy, erected a vantage ground above the common level of his countrymen,—nay, stood with the rare, barring few on the same level with him, and sat arrayed in majestic glory, viewing with unparalleled and mute rapture his friends and admirers lifting up their hands with heart-felt glee and laudation for his success in life.’ We have a little incident to show that his education, ‘though not very gairish, was of a most solid character.’ He was one day visiting a monument in Calcutta. ‘When he had ascended a few steps, he received a severe blow on the head, which rendered him impercipient for a few moments. A few seconds after

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

this a cyclopean English sailor came down the steps, and little Mookerjee asked him in a gentle voice what he had done to be treated thus.' He received a reply that 'stung him to the quick, and he addressed his rude assailant for more than an hour, chiefly enlarging on the principles of Christianity, and on the duty of regarding all men as fellow brethren without distinction of creed or colour. His words had a marvellous effect. The savage heart of the sailor was moved, and he went away making an apology for what he had done.'

The family fell into misfortune, and 'was threatened with Barmicide feast.' The industry of our hero is the more to be noticed, spite of misfortune, because there are innumerable 'instances of children possessed of competent means for education remaining beetle-headed for ever,' a remark for which there is no doubt a

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

great deal of justification. When he became a lawyer he soon 'gained the plerophory' of the pleaders, and he 'made it his business to restore happiness and sunshine to the faces on which he had not seen the soft and fascinating beams of a simper for many a grim-visaged year. He worked hard, for none can be great—impromptu.' He argued a great question before certain judges 'with laudable ratiocination and eloquence, but it proved to be the labour of Sisyphus, and he returned to his chamber malcontent.' He 'was attacked with a doloriferous boil,' which almost proved fatal, but after a 'peregrination' to the North-West and a change of residence 'he felt himself much emendatory in his health.' He became a member of the Bengal Council, far too many seats on which body are given, in the opinion of our author, to non-professional men, 'who are as if cocks of the roost,'

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

but this selection was 'most judicious and tiptop.' At last he was made a judge. 'This was a *desideratum* to him. The hope which he so long hatched at last yielded him what he so hankered after, and in seven league boots.' 'True hope is swift, and flies with swallow's wings,' and 'he might have justly said—*Veni, vidi, vici!*' 'His toils had yielded him fruits most sacchariferous and wished for—position, respect, and wealth.' We may crown this sketch of a great career by the remark that 'his elevation created a catholic ravishment throughout the domain under the benign and fostering sceptre of great Albion.' It should be added that 'when a boy he was filamentous, but gradually in course of time he became plump as a partridge'; and that when he left this earth 'all wept for him, and whole Bengal was in lachrymation, while even the learned judges of the High Court

SOME LITERARY CURIOSITIES

heaved sighs and closed it on its Appellate and Original Sides.'

Such are a few of many illustrations that might be given of the strange forms which our language may assume under skies somewhat favourable to grotesque and abnormal growths in many spheres.

XVIII

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

The Jain temple—The curious gate-keeper—In too great a hurry—The parable of the photographer—A divine chemistry—The picture at last.

ONE fine morning, in the delightful city of Calcutta, the amateur photographer set forth to the outskirts of the town, on serious business bent. In a somewhat secluded spot there stands a group of Jain temples, sufficiently out of the way to escape much public notice, and sufficiently remarkable to attract the man of the tripod and the lens. The word 'Jain,' as explained in a previous chapter, is the name of an Indian religion which stands on the borders of Hinduism and Buddhism ;



A JAIN TEMPLE, CALCUTTA.

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

one which owes much to both, but is unwilling to acknowledge its debts to either.

A picture of one of the best temples was duly taken, which picture is here reproduced for the reader. A little incident that occurred on that morning supplies the text for this brief homily.

There was a fine old fellow acting as *durwan*, or gate-keeper, to the temple garden; an old soldier apparently, who in his latter days had retired to this peaceful retreat. He was deeply interested in the proceedings of the hour, and watched very closely the placing of the tripod on the marble floor, the mysterious operations beneath the black cloth, and the final triumph of exposure. He waited with much patience while things were being prepared for retreat, but eventually could refrain no longer, and came up close to the operator and began to make inquiries. Being finally assured that a

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

picture of his charge had really been secured, he still was not satisfied, and at last said, 'Sahib, I want to see that picture.' Very good, he should see it. 'Yes,' said he ; ' but I want to see it now.' He thought that it was the right thing to secure the present opportunity, and could not understand that it might be well to wait. But he was presently initiated so far into the mysteries of the craft as to allow the departure of the picture, still in the safe seclusion of the dark-slide ; and in due time a finished print was sent him, as the reward for his civility and his patience. And all this set the photographer a-thinking.

' I want to see the picture.' And he did see it, but he had to wait for the sight. The incident may perhaps teach a profitable lesson to some other folk, as it helped to do to the picture-maker. For his proper business is not photography,

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

but preaching, and the other occupation claims only an occasional hour. The preacher is ever on the look-out for

Tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything,

even in the doings of the camera. We have known some excellent teachers on two legs, and owe them a great deal; how much may we not learn from one who stands on three! In the more serious affairs of life are we not too often like the *durwan*? We are too eager to see the finished work, and have not patience to await the finishing time. It may even sometimes happen that because we can see nothing we indulge in an unhappy unbelief, and persuade ourselves that there is nothing done.

Now, let us take the picture-making process, and see what it may teach. We all know in these days how the roll of film is placed in the camera, and then

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

wound from a full roller on to an empty one, passing in front of the lens during the process, and stopping on the way to receive the picture. Now, the film is already prepared and sensitized, and we will suppose that a proper portion is in position, in the dark chamber, and in front of the lens, which is shut off from the light. Everything is ready, a suitable subject occupies the field of view, the operator waits a favourable moment, and then—just for a brief flash—admits the bright light of day. It is only for a moment, but the important business is done and the used film rolls away in the darkness, while a new surface comes into position for the next attempt.

All this is not a bad setting forth of what is done in much of our work for Christ. Let us take, for instance, the mind of a child. There is, rolled away and unseen, the sensitized material, ready to receive

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

impressions from without as can no man-wrought film. The preacher, the teacher, the Christian mother—whoever may be doing God's work for the child—directs the mind towards the best things and the most beautiful ; to that which is true and of good report ; best of all, towards Him who is the altogether lovely. Then, at the wisely chosen moment, by some faithful deed or word, the exposure is made, the impression is received, and—what then ? Too often it seems quite forgotten, the work wasted, the toil mis-spent ; but it is not so. That portion of the mind-surface has received its picture, and rolls away into the darkness of a present forgetfulness ; but only to await the work that yet remains to be done.

What does the photographer do with his unfinished picture ? If we are allowed to accompany him, we shall be taken to a 'dark-room,' which is not really

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

dark, but into which may come no such light rays as would affect the sensitive surface which is upon the film. Now, in this secure light we shall see the box opened, and the piece of film which was exposed cut off and laid aside for a moment, or thrown into the water. Let us take up the film. 'This the picture! Why, there is no picture here; after all the preparation, and all the promise, there is just the white surface that was placed in the box, and, so far as we can see, nothing more.' There is much virtue in that saving clause, 'so far as we can see'; because we can see but a very little way, and we cannot see what really has been done. But our photographer is a practical man rather than a moralizer, and he proceeds to take so many drops of this acid, so many of that alkali, so much water, and thus makes up his 'developer.' Excellent name! Then appears some-

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

thing worth the seeing. He floods the film with his cunning mixture, and waits a while. Then comes one of the most beautiful of sights, as there begins to creep slowly and softly upon the white surface the faint and delicate outline of the picture that is to be. And it grows under the skilful hand and by the power of the chemistry it applies, until presently every beauty that was seen in the original picture displays itself in miniature there; and, clear, bright, and beautiful, you have the negative from which, when all is done, you may produce by the thousand the scene upon which you feasted your eyes first of all when the camera did its rapid and successful work.

You 'want to see the picture.' Then you can see it now. Thus are the myriad beauties of earth and sky and sea caught and held fast for the eyes of men, and by these carefully conducted processes do they come to perfectness.

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

And does not the parable still run on to higher things ? God has His own times, and His own places, and His own methods, for finishing His own work. Much of His most important work is done away from the eyes of men, and away from all their noise and stir and busy life. Does He not, when His time and opportunity have come, deal with the mind and soul by His own strange chemistry of love ? Long may the impression, the result of our endeavour, have been hidden away, and apparently forgotten. But so the film lies by, and it is not forgotten, but remains in safety in the darkness. It will come forth again. Sometimes in the subdued light of sorrow, of adversity, of affliction, the work of long ago is wrought out to its perfection. It is His work rather than ours, and He knows how to do it perfectly. All the secrets of His methods are unknown to us, but we know that He does all things

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

well. Sometimes He suffers the man who has done the earlier work to carry it on to the point at which its reality and its beauty may be seen. Sometimes, as also in the case of the film roll, it is passed on to other hands for its completion. When we are so allowed to carry on and carry out that which we have begun, we find a very blessed reward for our toil. When it passes to another hand, it may be out of our knowledge for the present ; but of the perfecting we shall know hereafter, and we shall share in the rejoicing. Sometimes God will, apart from any further human agency, so far as we can trace it, Himself, and quite by His own ways, carry on and finish the work ; but, after all, it matters not so much by whom or how it is done, so that it is accomplished.

And when it *is* accomplished, what have we ? We have the heavenly image in the

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

earthly life. It may have been a long, slow process, but there it is. There, in the soul of that one for whom you prayed and laboured long years ago, is now to be found righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. There, in that earthly life, is seen the reflection of the life of Him whom long ago you were able to set before the eye of the soul. The impression was not lost or forgotten ; the Christ is there to-day. There He is, revealed, clearly manifested, in that consecrated life. He prepared the sensitive mind, in His light the work was first begun, He flashed it upon the soul ; and then, at last, in your own or in other hands, under right conditions, there began to stand forth clearly and faithfully the image presented so long before. Therefore ‘be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

But is none in vain? Let our picture-maker stand forth for one brief moment more. Are there no failures with him? Ah, yes. Not every strip of film makes a picture. There are over-exposures, and there are under-exposures too. There are mistakes as to judgement, subject, light—many things. There are blunders in the after processes, by which good work is spoiled. There are faults in the material on which we have to work, and sometimes there are sorry blurs where we hoped for beautiful pictures; there are failures, hopeless and entire. That is his experience. And it is ours. Sometimes we can see, or think we can see, where the error lay, who made the mistake, and, very sadly, how *we* made it. Sometimes we cannot trace the fault; we only sorrowfully confess that there is a hopeless smudge where

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

the picture might have been. Every worker for Christ knows the sadness of such experience, but every one may know the joy of a brighter experience, and the gladness of success will be more intense than the sorrow of failure.

We 'want to see the picture.' We cannot but wish to see it. We should be poor creatures if we did not. We could tell of one good man who longed and prayed to see it, and seemed to pray in vain. He loved Christ, and for His dear sake loved and laboured for a class of lads in a Sunday school ; and he mourned because the work did not seem to succeed. The impressions were many. The subject was the noblest and the best. But there was no sight of the picture, and that meant prayers and tears, and perhaps self-reproaches. The day came when the Master called the servant, his work done ; yet he had not 'seen the picture.' But the sudden

WAITING FOR THE PICTURE

summons stirred many hearts, and deeply moved those of the lads he had loved and who had loved him. That sorrow was part of the divine chemistry of soul which the Master knows how to use, and it was effectual. Quite a number of those for whom that teacher prayed and laboured shortly afterwards gave themselves to Christ and to His service, and have since become faithful and devoted men. The image was developed, the picture was seen, and the work of the faithful servant appeared to the glory of God. He had been called to other spheres of service, but surely he shall know the joy.

May some weary, discouraged labourers, in danger of losing patience and losing faith, find a little cheer and comfort in this week-day homily !

XIX

ON THE MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

The celestial arch—The dingy water-cart, and one of its by-products—The light of heaven on lowly toil.

WE are far away from England's change-ful skies. Here in the 'gorgeous East' atmospheric effects are at a great advantage. Both by day and night there is a clearness and brilliance of the air to which we are strangers in the West. One afternoon, as we were crossing the *Maidan*, the great plain by the river which skirts the city of Calcutta, we saw a portion of a rainbow standing out clear against the eastern sky. The fragmentary picture was extremely beautiful; but presently the clouds gave way, the whole majestic arch

MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

came into view, and there sprang from earth to heaven, spanning the great city with its splendid sweep, the bow which God had set in the cloud. Never had we seen that sight in such perfection and apparent immensity, never such a beautiful exhibition of the blended colours of solar light. That was *one* of our rainbows—and it was a vision of glory. We propose nothing towards the manufacture of such as that.

But, near to the same spot, on another day, we saw another rainbow. Jolting down a hard and stony road, we came up with, and passed, a disreputable looking machine. It was drawn by a sorry nag, and driven by a half-clothed Jehu, as sorry as the beast. It was a plain, square-built water-cart, with the usual perforated pipe from which it dispensed its blessings dependent from the rear. It was ugly, but, as not seldom happens in such cases, practical and

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

useful ; for it steadily sent forth its gushing streams, and for a season laid the dust to rest. As we passed, the light fell just at the right angle for our vision ; and there, in the curved stream which spouted from the cart, was seen once more the rainbow. It was like a bit of heaven on earth, a brief flash of celestial beauty on the rough and dusty way.

Now we have it. The man with the water-cart was engaged in a most useful avocation, very important to the comfort of the city ; but he was, at the same time, busy with the manufacture of rainbows. Their appearance was indeed different from that of the mighty arch which spanned the sky ; but they were of the same order, sprang from the same source, and were of the same essential beauty.

The rainbow, as it smiles forth in its sevenfold splendour in the lulling of the storm, is the striking reminder of God's

MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

promise of love, and of His faithfulness to His word. Through all the generations since the flood, men, as they have gazed upon its blending curve of beauty, have remembered how unfailing is His promise, and how unforgetful is His care. But in this new dispensation the grace of God in Christ, as declared in His Word and shown in His life and death and resurrection, is the new rainbow of promise and of peace. This spans with its bright arch of hope all the darkness and sorrow of a lost world. It is promise and fulfilment too. And now, when we want to bring men to see the faithfulness and grace of God, we go not back so far as to the days of the flood, but we lead them to Bethlehem and to Galilee, to Gethsemane and to Calvary, and tell them the story of Jesus. That is sufficient. All the wonders of justice and of mercy, of holy indignation and of compassionate

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

love, blend in the one bright light of this grace of God to men.

But there are difficulties here. In India, as truly as at home, all this is set forth ; the story stands out bright upon its dark background, yet it seems to many a thing afar. When we were children we were told that a pot of money hung at the end of the rainbow. Possibly ; but nobody ever reached it, for it was an inaccessible splendour. We feel sometimes as though the great truths of the gospel are magnificently far from many with whom we have to deal. They hear, and they appreciate ; but they feel this more than we do ourselves. ‘ These words of yours are sweet,’ say heathen men sometimes ; ‘ but not for us : we are so dark, so poor, so far from God and heaven.’

Very well. We want somehow to take the bright promise of God, and bring it nearer to the hearts and lives of men.

MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

What it loses in far magnificence of perfect theory it gains in practical power. In India, we are set in the midst of many millions of men far from God, in heathen darkness, or in the greater hopelessness of false faiths. This need of bringing the truth very near has been deeply felt, and in some cases special things have been attempted in order to help in the work. Leper asylums, orphanages, and such places of mercy have been established ; and in the doing of such things, with loving hearts, we have brought the bright promise of God, once so remote, nearer to the hearts of men. Heavenly things have gladdened the dark and sorrowful earth, and to many souls there has come fulfilment as well as promise.

Back for a moment to that humble cart. Here is poor, common, lowly duty, everyday toil. This man who drives is no brilliant lecturer on the laws of light, but

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

just a labourer, watering the dusty road. Yet he is also sending forth in face of the declining sun, unseen by himself, a flood of beauty, a sort of perennial rainbow. And we need not climb pulpit stairs or journey far in order to do our Master's work. As we are engaged in the most ordinary duties, if in our hearts is love for Christ and for souls, the radiant light of heaven will fall upon the work we do and touch it into beauty. And it may be that we ourselves are unconscious of the gracious sight. In our special work for Christ, too, among the poor, the sinful, and the suffering, the blessing of God will accompany our toil, and bring His grace into the hearts of men.

Our work differs from our Master's. Yes. That is great, and this is small, as men would reckon. That, a thing of distant and complete magnificence ; this, a thing near at hand, and in many points imperfect. But they differ chiefly, as does

MANUFACTURE OF RAINBOWS

the celestial rainbow from the terrestrial, in their circumstances and in the scale on which they are displayed. In essence they are one. The same laws of light rule in the one case, and the same laws of love in the other. The finished work of Christ is the bright arch, embracing in its sweep the whole of earth's horizon, the work we do for Him cheers and blesses a few square yards of dusty street ; but both beam forth the same message of God. He has done the one, and because of that we can do the other. It is His touch alone that illumines and transfigures our work for Him.

It must be our endeavour so to live that our character and work may be capable of giving back that heavenly beauty. Life, with some, is in its circumstances as desperately dull as that of our cart-driver dragging up and down the weary road. But if the light of God fall upon our labour, it will take all the commonness

EVERYDAY LIFE IN BENGAL

out of it ; we shall succeed in making earth a little more like heaven, nay, bring something of heaven down to earth. The beauty of the Lord our God will be upon us, and that will make brighter and more blessed every path in which we tread. Men who never thought to look up to heaven for the glory there, will, as they tread earth's dusty ways, see something of it here, and will see with hearts unsatisfied. The next look will be upward, and that will be enough.

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